TITLE PAGE

Title of dissertation:
Evgenii Zamiatin and the literary stylization of Rusš

Name of candidate:
Philip John Cavendish

Degree:
PhD thesis

Institution:
School of Slavonic and East European Studies
University of London
All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS
The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Published by ProQuest LLC (2016). Copyright of the Dissertation is held by the Author.

All rights reserved.
This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

ProQuest LLC
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346
ABSTRACT

My doctoral thesis concerns the prose fiction of Evgenii Ivanovich Zamiatin (1884-1937), one of the most celebrated and flamboyant Russian writers of the early part of the twentieth century.

It concerns an aspect of his fiction which has received little scholarly attention until now - namely the use of popular folk-religious and urban culture in his early provincial stories, ecclesiastical parodies, and the 1924 play, Blokha. The thesis consists of eight chapters. The introductory chapter discusses Zamiatin's interest in skaz and popular language, his knowledge of popular folk-ecclesiastical culture, and the development of his 'neo-realistic' writing style. The chapters which follow are devoted to individual works as examples of this stylistic phenomenon. These are followed by a concluding chapter and a bibliography, with footnotes given at the end of each individual chapter.

My methodological approach is primarily expository and interpretative, relying on extra-textual sources where relevant. I analyse these stories and the play in terms of what the Formalist critic Boris Eikhenbaum has defined as 'literary populism' - in other words, a stylistic phenomenon in nineteenth and twentieth century Russian literature which involved the artistic reworking of such popular materials as folk tales, magic tales, spiritual songs, heroic ballads, popular drama, apocrypha, Saints' Lives, popular legends and ritual celebrations. I seek to present Zamiatin as a writer with neo-populist leanings, as a traveller, ethnographer, collector of folklore, linguist and poeticiser of ordinary life in the provinces; in particular, I consider the early years of his career, his association with the neo-populist journal Zavety, his links with such writers as Aleksei Remizov and Mikhail Prishvin, and the stylistic affinity his fiction bears to the contemporary 'neo-primitivist' movement in the fine arts.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Poludennitsa-Kuny</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Kriazhi</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Afrika</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Znamenie</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. <em>Chudesa</em>, or 'miracle stories':</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>O sviatom grekhe Zenitsy devy. Slovo pokhval' noe</em></td>
<td>264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>O tom, kak istselen byl inok Erazm</em></td>
<td>286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>O chude, proisshedshem v Pepel' nuiu Sredu</em></td>
<td>307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Blokha</td>
<td>351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>434</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
'Dragotsennye slova nevozmozhno vydumat', oni dolzhny byt' estestvennym, organicheskim svoistvom pisatelia, tak zhe kak otlozheniia dragotsennykh metallov i obrazovaniia dragotsennykh kamnei v gornykh porodakh. Zamiatin iavilsia k nam s Urala, gde dragotsennye, blagorodnye metally i kamni skaplivaiutsia, sobiraiutsia tysiachami, millionami let, lezhat pod davleniem ochen' tiazhelykh i grubykh porod i zhdut. Zhizn' idet. Dragotsennye kamni nachinaiut svetit'sia, stanoviat'sia samotsvetnymi i zhdut vekami nastoiashchego tsenitelia i znatoka, kotoryi podymet ikh iz kamennoi toshchi, vysvobodit i dast im prostor siiat' na ves' svet. Vot eto i est' Evgenii Ivanovich Zamiatin - gornyi inzhener nashego iazyka!'"

INTRODUCTION

More than most writers of his generation, Zamiatin constantly reinvented himself as an artist, varying the devices which constituted his creative method to such a degree that no all-encompassing and definitive assessment of his corpus is really possible - in the words of Alex Shane: '....in Zamjatin's work the elaboration of one technique was followed by a search for a new and different technique - a search that reflected his philosophy of never-ending revolution in all spheres of life.'

There have been attempts to chart his development in terms of precisely defined periods, each with its own set of devices and artistic values, but even these categories fall foul of his tendency to switch style radically at the same stage of his career for different strategic
purposes - one need only compare the different narrative procedures of, say, *Lovets chelovekov* and *Spodruchnitsa greshnykh*, both written during the same month in 1918, to see this process starkly at work.\(^3\) Even Zamiatin's own definition of his writing in terms of 'neo-realism', or 'synthetism', outlined in his lectures at the Petrograd House of Arts and in critical essays during the 1920s, applies rather more satisfactorily to his 'middle-period' (to borrow briefly Shane's definition) than to the rest of his work. For this reason, within the larger context of the modernist movement in Russian literature, it is not always easy to categorize his art as a whole.

My purpose is not to attempt another unifying approach to Zamiatin's disparate body of work, or to suggest that the traditional approaches are misguided; rather, I wish to highlight an aspect of his art which has been relatively neglected hitherto - namely, the so-called 'stylizations of Rus´', as illustrated by the provincial fiction, the three parodies of ecclesiastical literature, and the adaptation for stage of Leskov's celebrated satire, *Skaz o tul´skom kosom Levshe i o stal´noi blokhe* (1881), all of which may be said to constitute Zamiatin's response to the cultural construct known as Rus´.\(^4\) In my view, he was essentially a Janus-faced writer, one whose entire oeuvre, very broadly speaking, oscillated between two artistic poles of influence, one represented by Andrei Belyi, a self-consciously cosmopolitan writer, and the other by Aleksei Remizov, a writer deeply immersed in the 'native' sources of Russian literature and culture. Primarily through Remizov, and the literary tradition to which he belonged, Zamiatin developed an artistic interest in what the Formalist
critic Boris Eikhenbaum described as 'the fusion (skreshchenie) of "high" literature with lubok '; in other words, the incorporation into 'serious' prose of such materials as folk songs, heroic ballads, spiritual songs, proverbs, popular drama, Saints' Lives and church chronicles, a stylistic phenomenon which Eikhenbaum himself chose to designate as 'literary populism'. From Remizov, also, and Leskov as his predecessor, Zamiatin developed an interest in popular language and the artistic potential of skaz, both of the implicit and the explicit type. In many of his stylizations he assumes the guise of a narrator whose language, social position and imaginative outlook is ostensibly different from his own, this fictitious mask being maintained even during public performances of his work. Moreover, in his fiction as a whole we witness a number of experiments in the art of pastiche and parody, experiments which depend for their effectiveness on stylistic disguise: mock hagiographies, epistles, private letters, after-dinner speeches, and so on, each of which employs a very different register, tone and style of narration.

In his obituary of Zamiatin, written after his untimely death in Paris in 1937, Remizov recognised their close spiritual kinship and defined it in terms of their 'common love of Russian "old singing"'. It is precisely this aspect of his work which I wish to examine here. In place of the conventional reading of Zamiatin as mathematician, designer and ship-building engineer, author of the dystopian novel My, elaborator of the theory of entropy and energy, iconoclastic heretic and victim of political persecution, satirist of English middle-class mores and manners, and 'epigone' of Andrei Belyi - a reading which, for obvious reasons, has
dominated critical discussion of his work until now - I would like to present Zamiatin the neo-populist, the traveller and ethnographer, the collector of folklore, the poeticiser of ordinary life in the provinces, and 'geologist' mining for 'precious metals' in the rich seams of the Russian language.11 Such a study concerns itself with the deeply Russian side of Zamiatin's artistic temperament, the negation and abandonment of which Maksim Gor'kii remarked upon and evidently lamented when he spoke of Zamiatin's attempt to become a 'European' writer later in his career.12 This is the aspect of his personality which is less well-known to readers and scholars alike. The stories which best illustrate Eikhenbaum's notion of 'literary populism', because they employ obscure materials and details from the imaginative world of the narod, adhere to a purely Russian, folk-based, artistic tradition, one whose aesthetic impact is difficult to appreciate fully, not only for the Western reader, but perhaps also for the cosmopolitan, urban-based, Russian intelligent. For this reason, my interest lies in identifying the sources used in these stories, clues to which are given in Zamiatin's lectures and critical writings, and in the prose works themselves, and in exploring exactly how these narratives work as poetic artefacts. Where relevant, I shall analyse the nature of the relationship between the implied narrator and actual author in order to examine the complex configurations of Zamiatin's skaz disguise. It is my view that while he certainly sought to communicate the resonances and richness of the Russian folk-religious mind, he did so with an ambiguous, not to say ironic attitude. He was a subtle ventriloquist, one who 'threw' his voice with a knowing sophistication, almost a playfulness, which was rooted in
formalistic ideas about the nature of fiction and the writer's art. In my judgement, it is this aspect of his *lubok*-style experiments which most thoroughly deserves to be called 'modern'.

Zamiatin's experiments in the popular imagination undeniably entail a different emphasis as far as his biography is concerned. Hitherto, scholars have tended to focus on his writing and publishing activities during the post-revolutionary period, especially as they relate to his influence in the field of cultural politics, his gradual exclusion from literary life during the 1920s, his public denunciation by Party hacks during the 'My affair' of 1929, and his subsequent exile abroad.\(^{13}\) Such an emphasis is hardly surprising in view of Zamiatin's well-known fate at the hands of the Soviet authorities. Since he was a writer of independent inclinations who dared to challenge the emerging Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy in the field of the arts and literature during the twenties, a writer whose works remained on official blacklists until well into the Gorbachev era, it is perhaps inevitable that scholars should have concentrated on resurrecting the past, thereby reversing the tide of official amnesia, and reinstating Zamiatin as a key figure in the development of Russian literary modernism.\(^{14}\) Much of this work, undertaken since his unofficial rehabilitation in 1986, is based on the release of hitherto inaccessible documents - as such, it provides a new and stimulating understanding of the complex issues which surrounded Zamiatin after his return from Great Britain in 1917; this is particularly true where it concerns his arrest in 1922 and subsequent attempts to be allowed abroad,\(^{15}\) the intensive efforts to get *My* published during the years from 1920 to 1924,\(^{16}\) the
letters to his wife, Liudmila Nikolaevna,17 and the private correspondence with such writers as Bulgakov, Fedin, Pil’niak and Remizov.18 However, despite its undoubted importance, such scholarship tends to give rise to a rather skewed vision of Zamiatin as a writer. It attaches excessive importance to My at the expense of his other works, thus overemphasizing the political and polemical aspects of his life and fiction to the exclusion of purely artistic considerations. It ignores the neopopulist milieu in which he moved during the early years of his career and which shaped his outlook on cultural and literary matters. It also completely overlooks his stylistic experiments in the field of skaz. It is symptomatic that very little of this recent academic work offers new interpretations of his fiction, or indeed expands the field of inquiry to include the less well-known, more difficult stories. Yet for many contemporaries, first and foremost Maksim Gor’kii, it was precisely these works which constituted Zamiatin's most original and lasting contribution to Russian literature. In my view, the time is ripe for a second 'rehabilitation' of Zamiatin, one which gives due attention to the purely Russian, popular dynamic of his tales, and the provincial and ecclesiastical background from which this dynamic clearly emerges.

In contrast to the post-revolutionary period, information about the period prior to 1917 is relatively meagre.19 Much importance has been attached to Zamiatin's provincial upbringing as the inspiration for his most typically Russian stories. He was born on 20 January (Old Style) 1884 in the small town of Lebedian', Tambov province (population 6,678 in the census of 1894),20
where he spent the first years of his life until sent to Voronezh at the age of nine to attend a boys' gymnasium. There can be little doubt that the province of Tambov supplied him with the character models and provincial kolorit for many of his stories, just as the adjacent regions had done for Tolstoi, Turgenev, Bunin and others before him (Turgenev immortalized Lebedian' in Zapiski okhotnika).

Equally important, however, and a fact not without consequence in view of the fashion for literary fieldwork at the turn of the century - by which I mean the practice of collecting oral folklore and ethnographic data directly from the narod - Zamiatin was extremely well travelled within the Russian empire. While still only a student at the polytechnic in St. Petersburg, he visited a large number of areas every summer on ship-building apprenticeship work - these trips embraced factories along the Kama River, towns along the Volga river as far as Tsaritsyn (including Nizhnii Novgorod), Astrakhan', the Caspian Sea, Odessa, Sevastopol', the Donetsk region, the Caucasus, and the Northern towns of Arkhangel'sk and Murmansk. After graduating, he undertook two further trips to the far north, visiting Kem', Soroka (now Belomorsk) and the Solovki islands in 1915, and twelve years later visiting the town of Aleksandrovsk (now Poliarnyi) for the shooting of Severnaia liubov', a film based on the Northern tale, Sever (1918). Intriguingly, nearly all the stories in which the geographical location is indicated and genuine (as opposed to fictitious) can be traced to those areas which Zamiatin knew intimately and from which strong impressions had been formed; indeed, in one particular instance there is evidence that conversations with local fishermen gave him the idea for a
Certainly, it is doubtful that he would have been able 'to think with the imagination of a provincial' ('myslit’ po-uezdnomu'), an expression coined during his lectures on the art of creative writing, without this kind of intimate and detailed knowledge. Furthermore, such evidence gives lie to the claim, often touted by his political enemies, that he had no direct or authentic experience of the provinces at all.

Another aspect of Zamiatin's biography worth highlighting is the extreme religiosity of his parents, an aspect which has only recently come to light. It would not be an exaggeration to say that from early childhood onwards Zamiatin was steeped in Orthodox Christian culture. His father, Ivan Dmitrievich, a lay priest serving in Lebedian's Church of the Veil of the Holy Virgin until his death in 1916, was responsible for religious instruction at the local pre-gymnasium where Zamiatin himself was taught between the ages of eight and nine; furthermore, his mother, Mariia Aleksandrovna (maiden name Platonova), herself hailed from an extremely devout family (her own father was a priest) and used to embark on regular pilgrimages to monasteries in the local vicinity and farther afield, quite frequently with the two children in tow. One of Zamiatin's earliest recollections from childhood was the traumatic experience of losing his parents during a pilgrimage to Zadonsk, a monastery situated north of Lebedian on the River Don and famous throughout Russia as the resting place of the saintly elder, Tikhon. In another autobiographical article, written two years later, he recalled with evident nostalgia the religious processions which used to take place every summer outside his home: the parading of the Icon of
the Virgin Mary of Kazan', the sweaty pilgrims, the 'wandering' monks and nuns, and the cursing of the Holy Fool, 'Vasia "The-Anti-Christ"', a disturbing mixture of the sacred and the profane. Strizhev argues that this environment was crucial in determining the fabric of his skaz-style ornamentation; and it is worth speculating on the extent to which the many references to sacred literature in the early stories - for example, the chet’imiñe (readings from the Saints' Lives, arranged according to the calendar year), the (svetnik) (triod) and (izborniki otecheskie), all of which line the library wall of the priest portrayed in the short story Neputevyi (1913) - imply an intimate acquaintance with their contents. As we shall see, Zamiatin recommended such sources to his students as linguistic material with which to enrich and revitalize the modern literary language. His stories reveal an impressive knowledge of the Church, especially as it pertains to the symbolic importance of certain feast-days; in addition, perhaps as a result of his family background, he was exceptionally familiar with the Gospels, the Old Testament, and apocryphal literature generally. Although characterizing his attitude towards religion is by no means uncomplicated - apparently, he was castigated by his father and his local church for participating in the 1905 revolution, a reaction which led to their mutual estrangement and suggested that at this stage in his life Zamiatin was an agnostic, if not an atheist - it is probably fair to say that this cultural inheritance from his family played a significant part in his folk-religious 'impersonations'. Both the stories set directly in religious milieux - Znamenie (1918), Spodruchnitsa greshnykh (1922) and Nadezhnoe mesto (1924) - and the numerous parodies of ecclesiastical styles offer copious
evidence of this fact. Moreover, it is interesting to note that he adopted the name of his grandfather on his mother's side, Mikhail Platonov, as his nom de plume during the early months of the new Soviet government.

Zamiatin's literary career was launched properly with a series of stories exploring the concept of provinciality in Russian life. His first collection, Uezdnoe (1916), contained six stories which, while varying to a certain extent in terms of theme, nevertheless tended to paint the same, rather depressing picture of life 'in the sticks', with hopelessness, suffocation, oppression, corruption, boredom, brutality and cruelty being the dominant features. Thematically, they were marked by a strong interest in 'material reality' (byt), and this realism was shot through with a grotesque crudity which only increased the reader's sense of ugliness and despair. Inevitably, since they were originally published in such journals as Zavety and Ezhesemiachnyi zhurnal, both neopopulist, progressive publications, these stories were viewed from the political perspective of the time, and compared with other works which concerned themselves with the question of Russia's post-1905 identity. They followed hard on the heels of Ivan Bunin's Derevnia (1910), Maksim Gor'kii's Gorodok Okurov (1909-10), Ivan Vol'nyi's Povest' o dniakh moei zhizni (1912-14), A. Chapygin's Belyi skit (1913), and Remizov's Piataia iazva (1912), all works exploring the darker side of Russian life as manifested in small provincial towns and villages. Unsurprisingly, contemporary reviewers tended to regard Zamiatin's fiction as another contribution to the 'rural debate' and
as a meditation on the vestiges of Tatar 'atavism' in the national character.\textsuperscript{43}

One of the most striking aspects of this first collection, however, was the Remizov-like concern with narrative style. In an early review of \textit{Uezdnoe} (the story), Eikhenbaum recognised immediately the literary kinship and pigeon-holed Zamiatin within a self-designated Remizovian 'school'.\textsuperscript{44} Other critics followed suit and drew comparisons between Zamiatin's style of writing and that of the so-called 'neo-realists', a literary tendency which embraced the likes of Leonid Dobronravov, Ivan Vol'nov, A. Terek (the pseudonym of Ol'ga Forsh) and Mikhail Prishvin, and was supposedly being championed by the literary critic and editor at \textit{Zavety}, R. Ivanov-Razumnik.\textsuperscript{45} Zamiatin himself emphatically denied any literary influence derived from Remizov, responding to an inquiry by S. A. Vengerov in 1916 with the information that he had only read Remizov's works 'relatively recently' and did not consider their writing styles to share much in common.\textsuperscript{46} There may be an element of truth in this claim - the first evidence of Zamiatin's knowledge of Remizov's work appears in his 1914 'Sirin' review, where he refers only to \textit{Neuemnyi buben} (1910), \textit{Krestovye sestry} (1911) and \textit{Tsep' zlataia}, which was the collection of stories published in the two volumes under review.\textsuperscript{47} Yet whatever Zamiatin's protestations to the contrary, \textit{Uezdnoe} (the story and collection) represented a radical stylistic break from the first stories of his literary career, \textit{Odin} (1908) and \textit{Devushka} (1910), both of which were written in a relatively conventional, non-stylized prose.\textsuperscript{48} By employing for the first time a \textit{skaz}-orientated voice, one which sought to reflect
the coarse and brutish discourse of the milieu depicted in his tales, Zamiatin fundamentally reinvented himself as a writer. Moreover, the degree of skill with which he applied this new technique can be gauged by the reaction of his commissioning editors at Zavety, many of whom were surprised and amused when the 'engineer from the Urals', as he was first imagined, appeared before them in person at an editorial meeting and introduced himself. Zamiatin was sufficiently amused by the reception of Uezdnoe, in particular a review by the critic Izmailov (who mistook the coarseness of the narratorial voice to be a genuine reflection of the author's social status), that he mentioned it in a letter to his wife while recuperating in the military garrison of Nikolaev-Kherson in 1913. The same review is mentioned again in one of his later autobiographical pieces. Furthermore, published versions of the lectures on the art of creative writing which he delivered much later in the Petrograd House of Arts reveal that he planned to mention this review in his discussions on narrative technique, along with anecdotes regarding his first meetings with Ivanov-Razumnik.

By the time of these lectures, delivered six years after the publication of Uezdnoe (the story) and thus well into Zamiatin's career, this narratorial conceit had been defined as a major stylistic device in a full-blown theory of 'neo-realism'. It should be stated at the outset that these lectures were planned originally as classes in the general techniques of creative writing; nonetheless, it is quite clear from their published contents that in practice the lecturers gave preference to their own literary tastes and aesthetic values. Zamiatin, for example, started his lecture
'O iazyke' by drawing his students' attention to the tendency of modern prose towards the epic and away from the lyrical, giving rise to the kind of writing in which authors 'dissolved' themselves into the consciousness of their characters like an actor working according to the latest theories of Stanislavskian method-acting. In his view, this technique could and should be extended to include all objective remarks and descriptive passages made by the author, so that the author 'disappeared' completely and assumed the guise of a representative persona whose language and consciousness mirrored that of the milieu described:

'Esli vy pishete ob uezdnoi zhizni - vy dolzhny sami v etot moment zhit' uezdnoi zhizni, sredi uezdnykh liudei, myslit' po-uezdnomu, - vy dolzhny zabyt', chto est' Peterburg, Moskva, Evropa i chto vy pishete bol'she vsego dla Peterburga, i Moskvy, a ne dla Chukhlomy i Alatyria.'54

He stressed the importance of the author presenting the imaginary world of his creation as if he himself were a genuine and integral part of it, with all stylistic devices at his disposal rigorously harnessed to the creation of an impression of authenticity. All images and metaphors should reflect the consciousness of the given environment and the characters which inhabited it; at the same time, however, the language used by the narrative voice should be a carefully synthetised stylization of the language of the particular milieu, not necessarily a direct imitation of its lexicon, syntax and intonational register:
The writer's skill, he argued, lay in choosing and incorporating into his text only the colourful, rare and original examples of colloquial speech, as opposed to rough and substandard banalities: in his own words, the aim was to 'enrich' the language, not to 'soil' it.\textsuperscript{56}

Like other 'literary populists' before him, Zamiatin considered the speech and expressions of ordinary people to be a rich linguistic seam which could be profitably mined for poetic effect and enfranchised within the bounds of acceptable literary taste. He taught his students to observe closely the speech of the common folk, to observe the unexpected images, the subtle and humorous epithets, and the expressive phrases in order to incorporate them into their writing.\textsuperscript{57} Believing that every milieu had its own syntactical idiosyncracies, or 'arrangement of words' (rasstanovka slov), he devoted a significant part of his lecture to outlining some of the features typical of 'popular language'. These included the frequent use of diminutive and augmentative forms, idioms, colloquialisms, dialect and idiosyncratic forms, the general absence of subordinate clauses, conjunctions and verbs, the use of old forms of the adverbial participle, repeated use of prepositions, particles and collective forms, both in the singular and plural, and so on, all of which imbued the language with an 'unusual expressivity and dynamism'.\textsuperscript{58} He argued that the
Russian spoken in the central provinces and the far-flung areas of the North, such as Olonets and Arkhangelsk, was far purer, more authentic, and thus intrinsically more interesting than the language spoken by the paper-reading, metropolitan intelligentsia; moreover, he believed that it was the duty of every writer to travel to these areas and seek out these linguistic 'gems' for himself:

'Vse eti zhemchuzhiny nado otkapyvat' ne v bol'shikh
gorodakh, a v korennoi, istovoi, kondovoi Rusi (. ...). Tol'ko
zdes' i mozhno uchit' sia russkomu iazyku, tol'ko otsiuda i
mozhno cherpat' takoe, chto deistvitel'no mozhet obogatit'
literaturnyi iazyk.'

At the same time, Zamiatin advocated the consulting of certain literary source materials as part of this enriching process - for example, epic ballads (byliny), folk-tales (skazki) and songs (pesni), which he stressed should be read in their original versions, as recorded by the Imperial Geographical Society of the Academy of Sciences, rather than in the modern, revised, and therefore diluted editions. He encouraged his students to pursue their researches further back in history to various ecclesiastical sources: apocrypha, the acathists, Saints' Lives, both Old Believer and Orthodox versions, and church monuments (pamiatniki) - in short, the sort of material which Boris Eikhenbaum characterized in terms of lubok in his remarks on Leskov and literary populism. Zamiatin proceeded to list an array of mainstream Russian writers for whom these sources had also served to enrich their language: Nikolai Leskov, whose
specialisation lay in the field of ecclesiastical sources and folklore (ie. 'provincialisms'); Pavel Mel'nikov-Pecherskii, who used Old Believer printed materials and provincialisms; Lev Tolstoi, whose plays, such as *Vlast' t'my*, Zamiatin much admired for their richness of dialect and use of the vernacular; Maksim Gor'kii, who only 'properly' exploited his knowledge of folklore in his so-called 'third phase' (Zamiatin gives *Eralash* as a typical example); the poet Nikolai Kliuev, 'an amazing specialist and master of language', who came from Vytegor, Olonets province; and Aleksei Remizov, whose skill lay in 'digging up precious jewels in old books, especially Old Believer texts'.

Although 'O iazyke' is primarily concerned with the linguistic devices of the 'new realism', it is undoubtedly also interesting from the point of view of literary populism. Several observations are worth making in this respect. There is, for instance, a palpably neo-populist and neo-slavophile tenor to Zamiatin's remarks. The statement that the *narod* is 'the prime source and creator of language'; his observation that the language spoken in areas lying to the West has become 'corrupted' due to Belorussian and Polish influence; the use of adjectives like 'native' (*korennoi*), 'solid' (*kondovyi*) and 'pure' (*istinnyi*) to characterize the areas of central Russia and the North; and the choice of primary source material, much of it collected by a Slavophile-inclined intelligentsia during the latter half of the nineteenth century, place Zamiatin squarely within a neo-Slavophile cultural tradition, irrespective of his political views. The vigour with which he stressed the importance of these primary sources, and his assertion that the writer should
experience this culture first-hand, rather than through the intermediary of secondary sources, echoed the Populist practice of 'going out among the people' ('khozhdenie v narod') and the practice of many artists at the turn of the century interested in the art forms of the folk. Obviously, these precepts on the need to revitalise and enrich literary prose through popular language belong to a much wider stylistic phenomenon, one which was gathering pace during the first decades of the twentieth century. They come close to duplicating, for example, the theories of the Opoia group, later the Formalists, on the need for poetic language periodically to renew itself in order for 'lived experience' to be strikingly portrayed. Although there is no evidence that Zamiatin moved in this circle at the time of writing his early stories, his words strongly reflect the thesis first put forward by Eikhenbaum in his 1913 review of Uezdnoe. Eikhenbaum was at pains to draw a distinction between the sceptical, modernist interest in the renewal of genre at the turn of the century and the 'romanticism' of the nineteenth-century Slavophiles - as he argued in his later essay on Leskov:

'Nashe sovremennoe literaturnoe "narodnichestvo" opiraetsia, konechno, ne na slavianofil'skii romantizm, a na ubezhdenie v tom, chto "nizovye" zhanry (epicheskie, liricheskie i dramaticheskie) dolzhny obnovit' i osvezhit' "vysokoe" iskusstvo.'

Zamiatin expressed this position slightly differently, talking about the 'democratization' of the written word and the crucial importance of bringing the literary language and the vernacular
closer together. He compared himself to a number of writers in the West - Henri Barbusse in *Le Feu*, the American short story writer, O. Henry, and the Italian disciples of Gabriele D'Annunzio (Zuccoli and Papini) - all of whom, he suggested, were striving for an effect of immediacy, dynamism and spontaneity in their art.

In a larger context, Zamiatin saw himself fighting a battle against conservative adversaries who, like the 'archaist' Admiral Shishkov in his time, were seeking to protect 'high' literature from 'vulgar' contamination. In many ways, his interest in linguistic enrichment, although not nearly as iconoclastic or ambitious in scope, can be compared profitably to the 'trans-sense' innovations of the Futurists. 'Baryba', the richly euphonic sobriquet given to the brutish and square-jawed protagonist of *Uezdnoe*, the inspiration for which had apparently derived from the name of a small station, Barybino, on the railway line connecting Moscow and Lebedian, had appeared already in Sergei Gorodetskii's *Iar* (1907), and from there, according to Eikhenbaum, migrated to Kruchenykh's trans-sense manifesto, *Deklaratsiia zaumnogo iazyka* (1913). Like the Futurist groups, Zamiatin was in favour of creating new words, or neologisms, declaring in 'O iazyke' that this was a natural process which mirrored the very practice of the *narod* itself. Indeed, in a later review the literary critic, Voronskii, talked of the 'newly-minted' quality of Zamiatin's prose, comparing it favourably to the 'dirty, faded coins' of conventional writing which had been 'too long in circulation'. A similar stylistic revolution, triggered in part by the Pont-Aven school of painting in France in the 1880s and Gaugin's theory of 'synthetism', was taking place in the other fields of the arts: avant-garde painters, such as
expressionists, neo-primitivists and cubo-futurists, were adapting lubok techniques and incorporating primitive materials into their work for shock value; while modernist composers like Igor' Stravinskii borrowed popular songs and the 'dissonant' sounds of the street for ballets such as Petrushka.

Despite the undeniable interest of 'O iazyke', it is limited as a framework within which to explore Zamiatin's peculiar brand of literary populism. It is important to know that he recommended lubok-style sources for the weaving of a modern prose fabric, yet the linguistic composition of this fabric is only one element of his stories and quite frequently operates in complex ways. A related issue, one all too often overlooked by Zamiatin scholars, is the problem of how the theory of 'neo-realism' translates into practice. It is noteworthy, for example, that nowhere is the term skaz employed to describe his narrative procedures (although it is mentioned barely two years later in connection with Zoshchenko, Vsevolod Ivanov and Nikitin). In part, this may have been because the concept was not yet properly elaborated. Eikhenbaum's ground-breaking essay, 'Il'luziia skaza' (1918), had only just been published, while the more expansive and in-depth 'Leskov i sovremennaia proza' was not undertaken until 1925. Alternatively, the term's absence may be explained by the fact that, apart from the self-advertised experiments in first-person narration such as Pravda istinnaia (1916), Zamiatin's early fiction does not conform to the model of 'explicit' skaz. Rather, it belongs to the ill-defined territory of 'implicit' skaz, as suggested by Kastorskii in relation to Uezdnoe: 'The narrator does not appear in person in the tale, but in the tone of the entire
narrative it is felt that behind the author there is hidden some provincial man to whom the story has been entrusted.\textsuperscript{79} This formulation leads to the further problem of whether the author is truly absent from the text as the theory of 'neo-realism' demands. Vinogradov drew attention to this problem as early as 1925;\textsuperscript{80} and his ideas have been developed in Niqueux's recent analysis of \textit{Uezdnoe}, in which he remarks that while Zamiatin's 'narrators' may be said consistently to preserve the illusion of orality throughout their stories, the presence of an 'author' is easily detected through the text's sophisticated musical orchestration and ornamentation.\textsuperscript{81} Indeed, there exists an inevitable tension between actual author and ostensible narrator in Zamiatin's stories which becomes even more acute when we come to consider the other, traditional devices of artistic manipulation, such as metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, symbolism, irony, paradox, allusions to the literary canon, and so on, all of them markedly present in the early fiction and implying the presence of a highly developed literary consciousness. Eikhenbaum's view that the author of \textit{Uezdnoe} is totally self-effacing, and that the language of the narrative does not even belong to a fictional, provincial persona as such, but rather to the very 'voice of the provinces', is provocative and stimulating.\textsuperscript{82} Nevertheless, it cannot be taken literally as it stands. In practice, the narrative devices of Zamiatin's early fiction are merely conceits designed to give the illusion of spontaneity to a narrative which is in fact extraordinarily carefully crafted. For this reason, it would be preferable in my view to talk of the 'author-narrators' in Zamiatin's fiction, rather than the 'author' and 'narrator', since in fact they are not so easily distinguishable.
The idea that the artistic organization of these stories creates a 'space' between the author-narrator and the milieu he purports to describe has further implications as far as the use of popular materials is concerned. Eikhenbaum argued that Zamiatin's 'narrators' were essentially objective in their attitude towards the events described in their tales:

'Rasskazchik ne tol'ko bespristrasten, kakim dolzhen byt' khudozhnik, no i besstrasten (....). Zdes' ne rasskazchik, a "skazitel'". On zakryvaet glaza, kogda vedet svoi rasskaz, i nikomu net dela do ego sobstvennoi dushi.'

This is true only superficially, however. As Eric de Haard has pointed out in relation to the English satires, *Ostrovitiane* and *Lovets chelovekov*, Zamiatin's artistic manipulation of the text, especially his extensive use of metaphoric images which could not possibly have occurred to the fictional characters themselves, arouses the suspicion that there is an outsider present whose distinct personality, values and imaginative viewpoint are indirectly communicated to the reader. This can be witnessed not only by means of objective, authorial remarks which tend to adopt a sarcastic and ironic tone of voice with regard to the middle-class inhabitants of the tales, but also by the grotesque images which accompany 'negative' characters. Equally, while it is true that the English satires undeniably represent the acme of this 'synthetic' procedure, the same sophisticated devices can be detected in the early provincial works, albeit in embryonic form. Thus the result is an additional tension, or interplay,
between the imaginative consciousness of the milieu and that of the author-narrator, one which is deliberately exploited for poetic effect, rather than denied or concealed. It is an abiding paradox of Zamiatin's art that while his stories evidently attempt to convey the charm, humour and magical superstitions of the popular imagination, there is a rational spirit at work in his stories which deliberately places these qualities in an ironic light. Zamiatin's provincial mask may be said to 'slip' at critical junctures in the text to reveal the agnostic, sceptical, somewhat cold and logical intelligence which can be recognized so well from his public, artistically 'neutral' pronouncements. Shane has argued that 'permeating all of the early works, irony underscores life's incongruities and illuminates the contradiction between truth and what people think to be true.'^s Yet this observation can be developed much further: the more minutely we examine Zamiatin's impersonations of provincial voices, the more we appreciate the extent to which his own personality is an integral and irresistible element in the disguise; in other words, that his art is primarily the product of two sensibilities - the popular and the élite, the provincial and the metropolitan - which merge and blend effortlessly to form a fresh, new synthesis.

Two examples will, it is hoped, suffice to show the complexity of Zamiatin's strategy and to demonstrate how his choice of 'provincialism', intended ostensibly to introduce spontaneity and dynamism into the text, acquires an artistic dimension well beyond its purely novelty value. Take the word kuny, for example, which Zamiatin adopted as the title for one of his early short stories.° This has various connotations in the Russian
language, being related to the word for 'marten' (kunitsa), the sable-like animal prized for its fur, an expression used in the Southern Russia for a type of round-dance game (kunnyi krug), a metaphorical term employed in wedding songs to denote a young bride about to be married (svadebnaia kunitsa), and a synonym in the region of Tambov for the Russian word tsęp, meaning 'fetter' or 'chain'. Within the context of the narrative, which concerns a young girl's forbidden love for the village priest and her rejection of the more conventional route to love and marriage via the courtship ritual of a round-dance on St. Elijah's Day (July 20), kuny functions simultaneously on several different levels. As a word with a linguistic pedigree stretching all the way back to pagan times, it commands all the romantic associations evoked by the term 'kondoavaia Rus' - it is therefore a linguistic 'gem' of the kind mentioned by Zamiatin in his lecture on popular language. As an exotic folk ritual with deep roots in popular culture, moreover, it lends a certain degree of ethnographic authenticity to the narrative and may be said to possess a populist resonance. However, as a word-trope in the Shklovskian sense which offers at least three tenors for the one vehicle, all of them linked with the symbolism of marriage and the fear of remaining single, it opens up the text to ironic counterpoint and pathos: the young girl in the story plays a ritual game with significant implications, symbolically, for her future. In short, as a word-unit kuny injects far more than simply linguistic vitality and spontaneity into the story - it is, in fact, crucial for the ironic space between the 'authentic narrator' and actual author.
An equally illustrative case in point, one which concerns the symbolism of Orthodox feast-days, concerns Zamiatin's use of the word *prepolovenie* in the short story *Afrika* (1916). According to a standard ecclesiastical encyclopaedia, this is the name given to a religious festival falling exactly half-way between Easter Sunday and Pentecost (the etymology of the word derives from *polovina*, meaning 'half'), a festival which has been celebrated by the Orthodox Church from the very earliest days of its existence. As such, it clearly operates within the tale as a conventional and realistic indication of passing time. Further research into the subject, however, reveals that the rituals performed on this occasion have a symbolic resonance directly related to the hero's situation in the story. According to Sergei Maksimov, a journalist and writer whose monograph, *Krestnaia sila*, is an invaluable guide to the celebration of religious festivals in the nineteenth century, the Festival of Prepolovenie was associated in the popular mind with the 'mysterious' element of water: basing their actions on Christ's speech to the Pharisees during the Jewish Feast of the Tabernacle, a speech in which water is used as a metaphor for the spiritually restorative powers of the Holy Spirit, priests in Russia on this day conducted special blessings of rivers, streams and springs in the vicinity. In certain areas, moreover, apocryphal legends sprung up around the festival telling how the Virgin Mary had been miraculously delivered from drowning as she tried to escape bandits by swimming across a river with the baby Jesus in her arms - hence the peasant expression for the feast-day, *preplavlenie*, literally: 'a swimming across'. Zamiatin seems to have been peculiarly alive to this unusual resonance. In *Afrika*, the festival is
mentioned in the context of the hero, Fedor Volkov's decision to embark on a journey overseas (a symbolic crossing of water) and follows a three-paragraph skit on his predilection for 'swimming' in snow drifts when drunk. The verb *plavat'* is employed on four separate occasions during the course of this tiny fragment, the final instance of which, *proplaval* (I, 282), is a direct echo of the festival itself. What we witness here, in effect, is the orchestration of a small fragment of the text around an apocryphal legend, juxtaposing two parallel narratives for ironic, parodic effect. In other words, what starts out simply as a conventional indication of time, one which testifies to the narrator's familiarity with the important religious festivals of the Far North, becomes a vehicle for poetic manipulation at the hands of a playful author.

Zamiatin's fascination with words of this kind, and the imaginative, essentially folk-religious world in which they exist, needs to be placed in a wider literary context. Some of the linguistic 'gems' which feature in his fiction can also be found in the dictionary which Remizov compiled, on the insistence of his editors, for his 1908 collection of miniature short-stories entitled *Posolon* - as such, it is a useful indication of their obscurity as far as the general reading public at that time is concerned. At the same time, it is worth reminding ourselves that Zamiatin's adoption of these materials, at least from the formal point of view, was far from novel. Many writers of the Symbolist circle had long been interested in the artistic potential of folklore, believing it to be imbued with an intrinsic, mythopoeic value. Influenced to a large extent by the nineteenth-century
'mythological' school of social anthropology, a school whose theories proved influential for Aleksandr Afanas'ev's imaginative and gigantic compendium of Russian myth, *Poeticheskie vozziennia slavian na prirodu* (1866-1869), the Symbolists believed that all manifestations of folk culture, such as dances, rituals, games, songs, spells, chants, incantations, fortune-telling, legends and superstitions were remnants from a mythological past. Remizov, for example, seeking to rebut charges of plagiarism levelled against *Posolon*´, explained that his artistic aim had been 'to recreate popular myth, fragments of which I would recognize in rituals, games, *koliadki*, superstitions, omens, proverbs, riddles, charms and apocrypha'. Although individual approaches naturally varied, the general attitude of the Symbolists was essentially celebratory: folklore became synonymous with notions of 'otherness' i.e. as a means of exploring the transcendent, the irrational, the primitive, the world of magic, fantasy and 'dream-reality' - in short, as a 'means for reestablishing ties with primal sources of experience in a world deadened by "functional reality"'. As a result, the focus of their interest was mainly directed towards the rituals of liminality, such as weddings and funerals, magical practices, the lives of picturesque outsiders, such as Holy Fools, the *kaliki perekhozhie* (wandering cripples who performed spiritual songs), and the members of Old Believer sects, such as the *khlysty*, or flagellants, in Andrei Belyi's *Serebrianyi golub* (1909). Rather than acquire their own folklore through direct observation, they tended for the most part to plunder specialist sources, descriptive ethnography and exegeses of folklore which had been published in the previous century.
This is not the place to discuss the degree to which Zamiatin relied on Remizov as a source of verbal material, or indeed whether he was well acquainted with Afanas'ev and the great specialist collections of the previous century. Direct influence is difficult to pinpoint, especially in those cases where there is an absence of corroborative evidence outside the text.\textsuperscript{99} Equally complex is the role of folklore in Zamiatin's art.\textsuperscript{100} As 'O iazyke' makes clear, Zamiatin viewed folklore primarily as a facet of speech: it was a term he employed synonymously with such words as 'provincialism', 'speech' and 'language', and used to define the linguistic 'gems' which could be dug up in the heartlands of the Russian provinces and polished for professional use.\textsuperscript{101} While he was only too aware that contemporary critics had identified a knowledge of folklore in his own work, the term itself was interpreted in the context of language only:

'Iz pisatelei mladshego pokoleniia, dumaiu, ne bez osnovanii, kritika chasto otmecchala znание fol`klora v tom, chto napisano mnoiu; otmechu, chto ia pol`zovalsia pochti iskliuchitel`no zhivym, podslushannym fol`klorom - tambovskim, kostromskim i severnym. Khorosho znaiut iazyk takzhe Shmelev i Trenev, khotia u poslednikh mozhno vstretit` podchas rezhushchie ukho iuzhnye provintsializmy' (my emphases).\textsuperscript{102}

This is a valuable admission, not merely because it identifies the regions with which Zamiatin was most familiar from the 'populist' point of view, and the manner in which he acquired his 'folklore',

30
but also because it reflects the sense he attached to the term, as opposed to the meaning which critics themselves might have intended. Yet folklore in its broader, modern definition does feature regularly in his work. There are descriptions of seasonal and religious festivals, references to rituals for combating disease among animals, magical charms, incantations, sorcery, popular medicine, weather lore and peasant 'double-faith' (dvoeverie); similarly, we encounter allusions to popular songs and ballads, folktales, legends, apocrypha, magic tales, heroic ballads and so on, all of which is classifiable in terms of folk, or folk-religious literature.103 Undoubtedly part of the problem for the modern reader consists in identifying these materials; however, there is also the challenge of determining how exactly they function in relation to the work as a whole.

Rather than pertaining to the sphere of myth, as in the case of Symbolist writers, folkloric material in Zamiatin's fiction tends to function as kolorit - in other words, as an exotic and colourful backcloth woven out of ethnographically accurate data in order to impress upon the reader the 'narrator's' intimate familiarity with local life. It is a key element in his neo-realistic conceit which communicates not only the realia of daily life, but also the imaginative world of the milieu in question. In Uezdnoe, for example, Zamiatin incorporates the portrayal of a local witch, Ivanikha, and cites verbatim the charm (zagovor) which she intones in order to 'spoil' her victim.104 Likewise, in Starshina (1915), the half-wit hero, Ivan Konych, suggests to his fellow peasants that they plough a ritual furrow around the village in order to reverse an outbreak of cholera affecting the water
supply (such was the traditional manner in which 'evil spirits'
thought to be responsible for disease and misfortune were
combated in peasant communities). Both details belong
technically to the sphere of folkloric superstition and thus betray
a proto-Symbolist interest in the irrational beliefs of the poorer
peasantry. However, the artistic context in which they appear,
and the manner in which they are treated are fundamentally
different. The scene with Ivanikha is primarily comic, since the
malevolent spell is easily cured later in the tale by modern
medicine (for a contrasting, infinitely more sinister Symbolist
treatment of the witch figure, see the pock-marked Matrena in
Belyi's Serebrianyi golub). Similarly, in Starshina the water
supply has been simultaneously treated by doctors from a
neighbouring village - thus the miraculous abatement of the
cholera epidemic is given an alternative, more persuasive,
scientific rationale. In general, Zamiatin derives much humour at
the expense of peasant superstition; yet as his career begins to
blossom, and the hardened, satirical thrust of his art begins to be
tempered by a more earnest, lyrical expressionism, this sceptical
stance towards the imaginative world of the folk becomes
compromised and replaced by a romantic pathos, as a result of
which the world of popular fantasy is given more credence. In a
similar manner, his fictional protagonists become poeticised as
tragic heroes - victims of poverty, unrequited love, obsessions,
and the noble, albeit somewhat deluded, products of their own
over-developed imaginations.

The texts chosen to illustrate Zamiatin's brand of literary
populism in this thesis belong to a stage in his career which spans
1914 to 1924 - in other words, they tend to illustrate the romantic, rather than the cynical or satirical tendencies in his work. The stories examined can be divided into four categories: *Poludennitsa-Kuny* (1914-16), *Kriazhi* (1915) and *Afrika* (1916) form one group. They are *lubok*-style stories in terms of the colloquial orientation of the narrative voice, the simplicity of the plot and characterisation, the imagery, and the blend of irony and sympathy with which the fantasies of the popular mind are treated. Set in the three geographical locations mentioned in 'O iazyke' - Tambov, Kostroma, and the North - they illustrate the skill and subtlety with which Zamiatin handled his *skaz* impersonations. At the same time, the three stories are linked thematically. The main protagonists are all poor peasants harbouring illicit sexual passions, and suffering from obsessive desires, the fulfilment of which remains largely beyond their reach; in two cases - *Afrika* and *Kriazhi* - these obsessions lead to death. Shane, correctly in my view, reads these stories as testaments to Zamiatin's 'maximalist' approach to life and his belief that human beings 'should die striving for their goals, rather than live to discover them to be false illusions.' This philosophical position does not exclude political or social comment. There is a social dimension to the dilemmas of Zamiatin's protagonists in that the illicitness of their obsessions often involves a transgression of social hierarchy and a challenge to conservative sexual and moral norms: in *Kuny*, the main female protagonist, a simple peasant girl, desires the village priest; in *Kriazhi*, Ivan, the main male protagonist, is too poor for the object of his love to consider him seriously as a potential marriage prospect; and Fedor Volkov, in *Afrika*, develops an
obliteration with a female guest from overseas who is his social superior. This last example is symptomatic of the more general, utopian impulse which lies concealed behind these parables of unrequited love, i.e. the desire for a better, more rewarding life. 'Zhit' po-novomu', the phrase which inspires Volkov to undertake his journey abroad, is a euphemism for a better way of life in general, one which encompasses both material, spiritual and emotional considerations.

Znamenie forms the second category, since it is a tale which unfolds against a symbolic (rather than region-specific) setting, and one that is ecclesiastical in nature. Folk superstition, Biblical eschatology, the cult of the Virgin Mary, the legendary powers of icons, and the bizarre events of apocryphal legend are blended together to communicate the fantasies of the folk-religious mind. Znamenie also provides a convenient bridge between the early fiction and Zamiatin's three hagiographical parodies, the first of which, O sviatom grekhe Zenitsy devy, Slovo pokhval'noe, dates from 1917. The implicit skaz of the early texts, depending for its effectiveness on the illusion of a provincial narrator, is replaced here by the mask of an ecclesiastical chronicler steeped in the literature and imaginative world of the Orthodox tradition. It might be objected that these 'voices' are fundamentally at odds with each other, and that the hagiographical tradition which Zamiatin seeks to imitate belongs rather to the sphere of elite, rather than popular culture. Such an objection would be misguided. As acknowledged frequently by modern scholars, the very process of hagiographical construction itself, from the local veneration of the martyr and confessor saint to his or her
canonization, essentially mirrors the exigencies of writing fiction. The true historical figure is transformed, through the inclusion of legendary achievements, events and miracles, into a fictitious character whose actual 'life' bears little relation to the chronicle later produced by the annalists. It is a commonplace in the study of this genre to stress the important role of the common folk in creating the legend of the holy figure, and thus in giving 'shape' to his or her fictional story.\textsuperscript{108} The many improbable and miraculous episodes of hagiographical accounts are often the products of popular fantasy and can be traced back directly to folkloric \textit{topoi}. Moreover, it is extremely difficult to separate folk and religious sensibilities in a country where 'double-faith' was still so powerfully entrenched in urban and rural communities during the nineteenth century. This may be one reason why Eikhenbaum included the \textit{Lives} genre into his nominal category of \textit{lubok} material.

The final category consists of \textit{Blokha}, a self-confessed experiment in 'dramatized \textit{skaz}'.\textsuperscript{109} As a piece of craftsmanship, first produced at the Second Moscow Art Theatre under the directorship of A. Dikii in February 1925, \textit{Blokha} enjoyed enormous popularity with theatre-going audiences during the 1920s and was a signal success. More importantly, the successful staging of the play prompted Zamiatin's clearest statement with regard to his attitude towards popular culture, the essay 'Narodnyi teatr', which was written to coincide with the transfer of \textit{Blokha} to Leningrad in 1927.\textsuperscript{110} As the title suggests, this was an article devoted to the possibility of a genuinely popular theatre in the post-revolutionary era. Zamiatin was careful to
distinguish between the type of theatre foisted on the narod 'from above' for its own edification and instruction (a distinction which applied as much to Bolshevik-style agit-prop as it did to the 'theatre for the people' movement patronised at the turn of the century by Tsar Nicholas II), and the 'ancient', 'sturdy' and 'distinctive' forms of popular drama which had been developed by the populace themselves over the centuries for their own enjoyment and entertainment.\(^{111}\) Zamiatin appreciated that not all these forms were equally impressive, or lent themselves easily to professional adaptation (obrabotka) in the modern era; thus the artistic potential of each was carefully weighed. One of the key watchwords here was 'revitalization' (omolozhenie), a word used ostensibly in the context of Efimova and Simonovich's Petrushka puppet theatre, but very much in keeping with the general tenor of his remarks. Zamiatin argued that only through harnessing the dramatic, spontaneous and vigorous formal elements of popular drama could a new, artistic synthesis be achieved.\(^{112}\) Echoing Eikhenbaum's observations about Leskov and literary populism, which were published alongside the essay, Zamiatin placed himself in the company of a range of artists, musicians and painters working within a similar field: the sculptor Sergei Konenkov, Boris Kustodiev (the painter who accepted the commission to design the set of Blokha), Rerikh, Petrov-Vodkin, Leskov, Remizov, Musorgskii, Rimskii-Korsakov, Stravinskii and Diaghilev.\(^{113}\) Unsurprisingly, in view of the populist milieux in which he had moved since the very beginning of his literary career, he seemed well aware of how the techniques of peasant wood sculpture and icon-painting, and the themes of folktales, heroic ballads and popular songs and dances
had entered into the mainstream of Russian art during the previous decades.¹¹⁴

¹These words belong to the lawyer and literary scholar, Anatolii Fedorovich Koni, as cited in the memoirs of Aaron Shteinberg, a philosopher and close colleague of Zamiatin who belonged to Ivanov-Razumnik's Scythian circle and was later influential in establishing the Free Philosophical Society (Vol'fesila) in Spring 1919. See Shteinberg, Druz'ia moikh rokkh let (1911-1928), Paris, 1991, p. 158.
³This is the main problem with Shane's division of Zamiatin's writing career into 'periods' which supposedly reflect a particular artistic tendency - see Shane, op. cit., p. 97. Throughout this dissertation, I refer to the Neimanis (Munich) edition of Zamiatin's collected works. They are: Sochineniia. Tom pervyi, Munich, 1970; Sochineniia. Tom vtoroi, Munich, 1982; Sochineniia. Tom tretii, Munich, 1986; and Sochineniia. Tom chetvertyi, Munich, 1988. From here on, references to this edition in the text and footnotes will be given with the volume number in Roman numerals followed by the page number in Arabic e.g. Lovets chelovekov (I, 347-65) and Spodruchnitsa greshnykh (I, 389-96). The dates of the manuscripts are given respectively as 12 June and 29 June 1918 in the Zamiatin archive held at the Academy of Sciences' Institute of World Literature in Moscow (from here on, IMLI), fond 47, opis' 1, ed. kh. 51 & 53.
⁴The term 'stylization of Rus' is taken from J. van Baak's examination of Leskov and Zamiatin as writers occupying a
similarly 'peripheral' fictional space within the general literary construct of Rus’. He writes: 'The concept "stylization" here stands in opposition to what may be termed the objectively-descriptive or, in other words, the positivist ethnographical position.' See J. van Baak, 'Leskov and Zamyatin: Stylizers of Russia', in V. Polukhina, J. Andrew and R. Reid (eds.), *Literary Tradition and Practice in Russian Culture. Papers from an International Conference on the Occasion of the Seventieth Birthday of Yury Mikhailovich Lotman. 2-6 July 1992 Keele University*, Studies in Slavic Literature and Poetics, 20, Amsterdam, 1993, pp. 312-24, especially pp. 312 & 313.

5 '(....) skreshchenie "vysokoi" literatury s lubkom.' The essay from which this quotation is taken first appeared in a small booklet dedicated to Zamiatin’s *Blokha*, issued to coincide with the play’s premiere in Leningrad. See B. Eikhenbaum, 'Leskov i literaturnoe narodnichestvo', in *Blokha. Igra v 4 d. Evg. Zamiatina*, Leningrad, 1927, pp. 12-15 [p. 13].

6 'Pesni, skazki, byliny, dukhovnye stikhi, poslovitsy, narodnye dramy, zhitiia, letopisi (....) - etot material, pomimo ideinykh, obshchestvennykh tendentsii, nepreryvno sobiraetsia, izuchaetsia i pererabatyvaetsia, davaia osnovu dla sozdaniia osobykh form izyskannogo "lubka".' See ibid., p. 12.

7 Definitions of *skaz* will be discussed later in this introduction.

8 Remizov records that Zamiatin would often perform these stories 'with the voice of a "simpleton"' ('pod "prostaka"'). See Remizov’s obituary of Zamiatin, 'Stoiat' - negasimuiu svechu', first published in 1937, reprinted in *Nashe nasledie*, 1989, 1, pp. 117-19 [p. 118].

9 '(....) obshchaia liubov’ k russkomy "staromu peniiu".' - see ibid.

10 Viktor Shklovskii employed this disparaging expression in his review of Zamiatin's 'middle-period' works, in particular *Ostrovitiane* (1918) and *My* (1920-21). See V. Shklovskii, *Piat’ chelovek znakomykh*, Tiflis, 1927, pp. 44-67 [p. 44].

11 I paraphrase the view of Shteinberg: '...kak Kolumb otkryl Ameriku, on, Zamiatin, nashel novyi put’ k russkomy slovu, nashel neob’ iatnye, neotkrytye tsennosti v glubinnykh plastakh russkogo iazyka. On ikh razyskival, kak ishchut blagorodnye
metally i almazy v gornych porodakh Urala.' See Shteinberg, op. cit., p. 148.

12Gor'kii's negative assessment of Zamiatin arose in connection with the publication of Rasskaz o samom glavnom (1924): 'Ot ego rasskazov vsegda pakhnet potom, v kazhdoi ego fraze chuvstvuetsia usilie, s kotorym ona sdelana, v ego is''kusstve kholodno blestit iskusstvennost'. On khochet pisat' kak evropeets, iziashchno, ostro, so skepticeshkoi usmeshkoi, no, poka, ne napisal nichego luchshe "Uezdnogo".' See Gor'kii's note of mid-1924, cited in N. Primochkina, 'M. Gor'kii i E. Zamiatin (k istorii literaturnykh vzaimootnoshenii)', Russkaia literatura, 1987, 4, pp. 148-160 [p. 152].

13See the chapters 'Man of Letters, 1917-1929', 'Denunciation and Defamation, 1929-1931', and 'Exile and Death, 1931-1937', in Shane, op. cit., pp. 16-54, 55-81 & 82-96 respectively.

14Zamiatin's return to 'respectability', both in terms of the reissuing of his stories and essays, and the publication of crucial secondary materials, is discussed in the introduction to J. Graffy and A. Ustinov (pubs.), "'Moi deti-moi knigi": From Evgenii Zamiatin's Letters', in Themes and Variations. In Honor of Lazar Fleishman, Stanford Slavic Studies, 8, 1994, pp. 343-65.


18See the following: 'Iz perepiski M. A. Bulgakova s E. I. Zamiatinym i L. N. Zamiatinoi (1928-36)', pub. V. V. Buznik, Russkaia literatura, 1989, 4, pp. 178-88; "....mne seichas khochetsia tebe skazat'...." (iz perepiski Bor. Pil'niaka i Evg. Zamiatina s Konst. Fedinym)', Literaturnaiia ucheba, 1990, 2, pp. 79-95; and 'Pis' ma E. I. Zamiatina A. M. Remizovu', pub. V. V. Buznik, Russkaia literatura, 1992, 1, pp. 176-80.
The most illuminating material emerges in Zamiatin's autobiographical articles, five of which (not including draft versions) have seen the light of day hitherto. Three of them were published in his own lifetime - see the details listed in Shane, op. cit., p. 244. The first appeared in Vestnik literatury for 1922 and is reprinted in Neimanis (III, 13-14). A second article appeared two years later in a 1924 edition of Literaturnaia Rossiia (reprinted in Neimanis [IV, 11-12]). Finally, a third article was published in the first volume of the four-volume edition of Zamiatin's collected works in 1929 (reprinted in Neimanis [I, 25-32]). Subsequently, two more have emerged. An article entitled 'Avtobiografiia', written on 24 July 1923, has been discovered in the manuscript department of the Academy of Sciences' Institute of Russian Literature, Pushkin House - see "Avtobiografiia" E. I. Zamiatina', pub. V. V. Buznik, Russkaia literatura, 1992, 1, pp. 174-76. There is also an autobiographical article dating from 1931 which Zamiatin composed for an edition of A. M. Balagin's Slovar' dramaturgov, the complete version of which, until recently languishing in IMII, appeared as 'Avtobiografiia', pub. A. Galushkin, Strannik, 1, 1991, pp. 12-14 (it should be noted that a draft version of the above, differing little in terms of content, was published in V mire knig, 1988, 9, pp. 17-18, pub. A. Kazakov. Henceforth, for the sake of simplicity, I will refer to these articles using the capital letter 'A' followed by the year in which they were first written e.g. A: 1922, A; 1923, A: 1924, A: 1929 and A: 1931. Page references are to the editions mentioned in this footnote.


21See the 'Lebedian' chapter in Zapiski okhotnika (1852), reprinted in I. S. Turgenev, Sochinenia, twenty eight volumes, vol. 4, Moscow-Leningrad, 1963, pp. 7-388 [pp. 186-98]. The most intriguing of Zamiatin's character models was Chebotarikha in Uezdnoe, a sexually voracious merchant's widow who turned out to have been based on a real person: the writer Mikhail Prishvin's aunt! Zamiatin recalled discovering this coincidence in 'Zakulisy': 'Etu prishvinskuiu tetku ia ne odin raz videl v detstve,
ona prochno zasela vo mne i, mozhet byt', chtoby izbavit'sia ot nee - mne prishlos' vybrosit' ee iz sebia v povest' (....). Ee nastoiashchee imia v povesti ia ostavil pochti bez izmeneniia: skol'ko ia ni proboval, ia ne mog nazvat' ee inache (....).' See 'Zakulisy' (IV, 303-04).

22 The information about his travels while on contract work is given in A:1929 (I, 30) and A:1931, op. cit., p. 12.
23 See 'Zakulisy' (IV, p. 301).
24 See Shane, op. cit., p. 44.

25 While present at the shooting of this film on location in the summer of 1927, Zamiatin wrote to his wife, Liudmila Nikolaevna: 'Mozhet byt', ostanus' eshche na neskol'ko dnei, kogda vse uzhe uedut - narochno, chtoby povolochit'sia s rybakami (est' uzhe priatel', tol'ko nekogda pogovorit' s nim).' See Zamiatin's letter to Liudmila Nikolaevna dated 11 July 1927, RNB, fond 292, ed. kh. 7 (p. 9). Interestingly, the first drafts of Ela date from 14 August 1927, in other words, shortly after his return. See the Zamiatin archives in IMLI, fond 47, opis' 1, ed. kh. 94 & 95.

26 For the texts of these lectures, I have preferred the fuller versions published by Aleksandr Strizhev, rather than the Neimanis edition. See 'Literaturnaia studiia Zamiatina', Literaturnaia ucheba, 1988, 5, pp. 118-43; and 'Tekhnika khudozhestvennoi prozy', ibid., 1988, 6, pp. 79-107. The expression 'myslit' po uezdnomu' occurs in 'O iazyke', ibid., 6, p. 80.

27 This point might seem obvious, but there was a view prevalent in the early 1920s that Zamiatin did not know the provinces well and had misrepresented them in his early fiction. Boris Pil'niak, for one, seems to have laboured under this misapprehension: 'Vy ved' znaete, chto on svoe <Uezdnoe> napisal, sidia v Peterburge, po Daliu, Rossii ne vidia, vospriniav ee Remizovym - nam, provincsialam, vse eto videvshim na meste, iasno, chto Zamiatin ochen' talantlivos' vrett, prichem pishet takim iazykom, kotorym nigde v Rossii ne govoriat.' See Pil'niak's letter to V. Mirolubov dated 26 July 1921, cited in I. Shaitanov, 'O dvuh imenakh i ob odnom desiatletii', Literaturnoe obozrenie, 1991, 6, pp. 19-25 [p. 21].
This information, presumably acquired by Strizhev on the basis of a private interview with Zamiatin's sister, Aleksandra, before her death in 1965, is given in the footnotes accompanying publication of some early letters to his family. See 'Evgenii Zamiatin: "K razrusheniiu ravnovesiia..." ', pub. A. Strizhev, Nashe nasledie, 1989, 1, pp. 104-16 (113-16).

I. D. Zamiatin byl sviashchennikom tserkvi Pokrova Bogoroditsy v Lebediani.' See ibid., p.115. Margaret Ziolkowski has described religious instruction classes in the nineteenth century as a 'pot-pourri of biblical and ecclesiastical history, prayers, and catechetical passages'. Apparently, textbooks devoted to this subject often included some hagiography - a fact not without interest in view of Zamiatin's later parodies of the Lives. One such book, by an author calling himself Platon Afinskii, appeared in numerous editions and contained accounts of the early Byzantine saints, the Lives of Prince Vladimir of Kiev, and those of the monastic saints Feodosii of the Kiev Monastery and Sergii of Radonezh. It was still in circulation in Moscow as late as 1911. See M. Ziolkowski, Hagiography and Modern Russian Literature, Princeton, New Jersey, 1988, p. 23.

'Evgenii Zamiatin: "K razrusheniiu ravnovesiia..." ', op. cit., p. 116 (Strizhev's footnote).

The places mentioned by Strizhev are the monasteries in Lebedian' and the local village of Troekurovo, the holy places of Zadonsk and Voronezh, probably to venerate the relics of Tikhon of Zadonsk (1724-1783) and Mitrofanii of Voronezh (1683-1703), and the monastery in Sarovskaia pustyn', where Serafim of Sarov (1759-1833), an important mystic canonized by the Russian Orthodox Church in 1903, lay buried. See ibid.

Tikhon of Zadonsk was a writer and bishop of the diocese of Voronezh. His relics, which had been buried in the Church of the Holy Virgin within the Zadonsk monastery, were inspected in 1861; he was canonised shortly afterwards. Zamiatin recalls the visit to Zadonsk in A:1929 (I, 25).


The triod' postnaia and triod' tsvetnaia were terms given to the two church prayer books used on 'mobile' religious feast-
days. The tsvetniki and izborniki otecheskie were collections of Byzantine religious writings translated from the Greek and often containing accounts of early Christian Lives. See Polnyi pravoslavnyi bogoslovskii entsikopedicheskii slovar', two volumes, Moscow, 1992, vol. 2, columns 2178 and 928 respectively. Henceforth, for the sake of simplicity, this dictionary will be referred to as the Polnyi pravoslavnyi slovar'.

35 Neputevyi (I, 95-115 [101]).

In a letter to his sister dated 13 November 1901, as the seventeen-year-old Zamiatin was finishing his schooling in Voronezh, he mentioned receiving top marks for religious instruction. See 'Evgenii Zamiatin: "K razrusheniiu ravnovesia..."', op. cit., p. 114.

36 It is possible that the discussions about the existence of God between the radical Senia and the priest Petr Petrovich are semi-autobiographical. Senia's paradoxical love of everything ancient brings the two characters together: 'Na chem eto stolkovalis' oni? Razve eto vot, chto vsiakuiu starinu Senia liubil: tserkvi drevnie, lampady pod prazdnik, knigi v starykh kozhanykh perepletakh - minei, triodi da tsvetniki-izborniki otecheskie. Penie liubil tserkovnoe, raspevy vsiakie znal - i znamennyi, i pecherskii i po kriukam pel. Vot eto razve?' See Neputevyi (I, 101). It is worth comparing this fragment with Remizov's remark about Zamiatin's love of 'old singing' (see footnote 9).

37 The relationship between a clerical background and an interest in medieval Orthodox culture on the part of Russian intellectuals, especially if they happened to have been exposed to religious literature and the monastic life as children, is noted briefly by Ziolkowski, op. cit., pp. 17-18.

38 Zamiatin wrote approximately eighteen articles in the first six months of 1918, often signing his articles either 'Mikh. Platonov' or 'M. Platonov'. See A. Galushkin, 'Vechnyi otritsatel' i buntar'. E. Zamiatin - literaturnyi kritik', Literaturnoe obozrenie, 2, 1988, pp. 98-112 (p. 99). The information that this is the name of his grandfather on his mother's side is given in L. V. Poliakova, 'Evgenii Zamiatin: tvorcheskii put'. Analiz i otsenki', in
Tvorcheskoe nasledie Evgenia Zamiatina: Vzgliad iz segodnia, two volumes, Tambov, 1994, vol. 1, pp. 7-83 (p. 31).


41Zavety was the cultural organ of the Russian Socialist-Revolutionary Party, and its editorial board in St. Petersburg consisted of A. I. Ivanchin-Pisarev, one time close friend of the populist writer Vladimir Korolenko, the critic S. D. Mstislavskii, the journalist S. P. Postnikov, also chairman of the SRs, the populist editor Vladimir Mirolubov, the populist literary critic R. Ivanov-Razumnik, and the SR luminary Viktor Chernov. Chernov, who was living abroad at the time, was extremely impressed by Uezdnoe and keen to establish Zamiatin in a stable of young writers belonging exclusively to Zavety. He wrote to Ivanchin-Pisarev in January 1914: 'Etogo cheloveka nado nepremenno prilaskat', pribizit', obodrit': nam nuzhno sozdat' iz molodezhi, iz "budushchikh velichin", kak Zamiatin i Ivan Vol'nyi, svoikh pisatelei, kotorye by s "Zavetami" byh sviazany tak zhe intimno-blizko, kak kogda-to toutes proportions gardées - Gleb Uspenskii i Shchedrin s "Otech<estvennymi> zapiskami".' Cited in Graffy and Ustinov (pubs.), op. cit., p. 348. Unfortunately for Chernov, the horse had already bolted! After a row between Mirolubov and Ivanov-Razumnik in 1913 which caused the former to leave the editorial board and establish Ezemesiachnyi zhurnal on his own, Zamiatin published two short stories, one ocherk and three literary reviews there. It may be worth recalling that his second story, Devushka, was first published in Novyi zhurnal dla vsekh, 25, 1910, pp. 55-68, while Mirolubov was editor.

42This background is discussed in Michel Niqueux, Uezdnoe (Choses de province) de Zamiatine et le débat sur le peuple russe.

43See A. Izmailov, 'Temy i parodoksy', *Birzhevye vedomosti*, March 1916, quoted in Niqueux, ibid., p. 51. Similar sentiments were expressed by Viacheslav Polonskii, who dedicated an article to Zamiatin, Chapin and Nikandrov in Gor'kii's journal *Letopis* in 1916. He argued that the true hero of *Uezdnoe* was: 'Rus', uezdnaia, temnaia, provintsial'naia Rossiia.' Cited in Primochkina, op. cit., p. 148.

44'Zamiatin - uchenik Remizova, i ego-to shkolu on i utverzhdaet.' See Eikhenbaum, 'Strashnyi lad', first published in *Russkaia molva* on 17 July 1913, reprinted in Eikhenbaum, *O literature; raboty raznykh let*, Moscow, 1987, pp. 289-92 [p. 290]. In his 1937 obituary of Zamiatin, Remizov claimed that there was widespread suspicion at the time of *Uezdnoe* 's publication that he himself was the author writing under a pseudonym. After citing Fedor Sologub as the source of this suspicion, he added mischievously: 'Otzyv Sologuba byl obshchim literaturnym mneniem, nazyvai Neuemnyi buben kak obrazets.' See Remizov, 'Stoiat´...', op.cit., p. 118.

45See E. Lundberg, 'Literatury dniy dnevnik', *Sovremennik*, 1915, 1, p. 214; and, perhaps more importantly, Ivanov-Razumnik's own article about the new tendencies in Russian prose, 'Literatura i obshchestvennost'; russkaia literatura v 1913 godu', which appeared in the first issue of *Zavety* for 1914 and was later reprinted in his *Zavetnoe o kul`turnoi traditsii; stat`i 1912-1913 gg.* , Petersburg, 1922, pp. 35-56.

46'Remizova lichno uznal ne ochen’ davno i knigi ego stal chitat’ srasnitel’no pozdno. Kladovaia iazyka u menia i u Remizova raznaia: u nego - rukopisi i redkostnye knigi, a ia knigami pochti ne pol`zovalsia. Vnutrennee moe neskhodstvo s Remizovym - chem dal`she, tem, veroiatnee, budet bol`she zametno.' This response is contained in a letter to S. A. Vengerov dated 2 December (Old Style) 1916, presumably while Zamiatin was staying in Britain. It is preserved in the Zamiatin archive in IMLI, fond 47, opis´ 3, ed. khr. 2.

48This fact is recognized by Shane in his characterization of this period: 'His first stories ("Odin", "Devuška", and "Aprel") seek neither to achieve a symbolic synthesis by means of grotesque, impressionistic, and recurrent images, nor do they utilize regional expressions and the *skaz* narrative.' See Shane, op. cit., p. 126.

49Shteinberg, op. cit., p. 148.

50Zamiatin recounts how he had visited the local library and come across a copy of the evening edition of 'birzhevka': 'Tam estь tselyi Izmailovskii fel' etonchik, posviashchennyi Barybe (....). Kak zhe lovko, dolzhno byt', umeiu ia pritvoriat' sia: takie chudnye, na samom dele na menia ne pokhozhie, predpolozhennia obo mne.' See Zamiatin's letter to Liudmila Nikolaevna Usova dated 21 July 1913, RNB, fond 292, ed. khr. 12. The review in question, 'V literaturnom mire: Prishedshii kham', had been published a month previously in the evening edition of *Birzhevye vedomosti*, no. 13621, 28 June 1913.

51Zamiatin referred to Izmailov's review again in A:1922 (III, 14): '(....) pokoinyi Izmailov reshil pechatno, chto ia - v vysokikh sapogakh, uezdnyi, lokhmatyi, s tolstoi palkoi - i byl ochen' udivlen, kogda ia okazalsia sovsem ne takim.'

52'Primer: "Uezdnoe" - Izmailov.... Vstrechi v redaktsiiakh..... Nastol'ko mne udalos' sygrat' rol'. 'See 'O iazyke', op. cit., p. 80.

53Zamiatin's influence on his students, many of whom went on to become professional writers, was enormous. See, for example, the view of A. Levinson: 'Vliianie ego chrezvychaino veliko; dlia tekh zhe, kto znaet lish' nevysokuiu stopku ego knig, ono podchas zagadochno (....). Artel' svoiuon dressiroval u menia na glazakh. Vospityval v "tsekhovykh" svoikh vkus, kak treniruiut myshtsy u boksera. Nataskival ikh, kak chutkikh shcheniat. Sderzhival ikh stal' noj rukoi i nasmeshlivno prishchurenym vzgliadom. Moloduiu stikhiii on podchiniial distsipline. Umel pokazat' priem, tonko rasschitannyi i skupoi, sberegaiushchii energiiu i b'ishchii v
54'O iazyke', op. cit., p. 80.
55Ibid., p. 81
56'Nado vybrat´, kak ia uzhe govoril, takie slova, kotorye sposobny obogatit´ iazyk, takie slova, kotorye ochistiat iazyk, a ne zasoriat ego.' See ibid., p. 83.
57Ibid.
58Ibid., p. 81
59Ibid., p. 83.
60Ibid.
61From the Greek 'acathistos', meaning 'to sit, not to stand', a special office in the Greek Orthodox church in honour of the Mother of God.
63'Pervonachal´nyi istochnik i tvorets iazyka - narod. Fol´klor....' See ibid., p. 83.
64After delivering the long list of writers who had made use of popular materials, such as Leskov, Remizov, etc., Zamiatin stated the following: 'Perechislennye avtory mogut sluzhit´ vtoroistochnikami dlja izucheniiia iazyka. No etimi vtoroistochnikami nuzhno pol´zovat´ sia tol´ko dlia togo, chtoby voiti v dukh iazyka, poliubit´ iazyk, nauchit´ sia pol´zovat´ sia im. Cherpat´ materialy iz takikh vtoroistochnikov ne goditsia. Vpechatlenie original´nosti svoego iazyka vy mozhet sozdat´, konechno, tol´ko v tom sluchae, esli budete obrashchat´ sia neposredstvenno k pervoiistochnikam' (emphasis in the original). See ibid., p. 84.
65The Formalist interest in renewing mechanically lived experience through innovations in language and form was articulated by Eikhenbaum in his 1912 review of Ivan Novikov's Rasskazy : '(....) my kak-to po-novomu chuvstvuem (...) i noch´, i liudei, i vsiu prirodu. A kakoe eto naslazhdenie - zanovo perezhit´ to, chto uzhe ustoialos´, zastylo!' Cited in the commentary to Eikhenbaum, 'Strashnyi lad', op. cit., p. 477.
66"Skazyvat" nuzhno zabavno, nuzhno slovami i pribautkami sypat´, chtoby u vsekh ushi porazvesilis´ i rty proraskrylis´. Kak
zhe sdelat' iazyk zabavnym dlia gorodskikh, "literurnykh" chitatelei? Nado dopustit' dialekty, nado osvezhit' zastoiaavshuiusia i izlomanniiu metaforami rech' oblastnymi govorami' (my emphases). See ibid., p. 290.
67Eikhentbaum, 'Leskov i literurnoe narodnichestvo', op. cit., p. 15.
68la schitaiu eto iavlenie - sblizenie literurnogo i razgovornogo iazyka - ochen' zhizhnennym , ono idet v nogu s obshchei istoricheskoi tendentsiei k demokratizatsii vsei zhizni' (emphasis in the original). See 'O iazyke', op. cit., p. 85.
69Ibid. It is not quite clear why Zamiatin mentions these Italian writers. He is clearly referring to the poet, dramatist and prose writer, Gabriele D'Annunzio (1863-1938), and the prose writers Giovanni Papini (1881-1956) and Luciano Zuccoli (1868-1929). Only Papini, however, whose Esperienza futurista appeared in 1913-14, could in any way be described as an experimenter in the avant-garde mould. It is also not clear to which 'triumphant manifesto' of D'Annunzio he is referring.
70Ibid.
71See 'Zakuhsy' (IV, 301).
72See the commentary in Eikhentbaum, 'Strashnyi lad', op. cit., p. 480.
73V narode chasto vy mozhete vstretit' cheloveka, kotoryi za slovom v karman ne polezet, s takim zhe talantom i chut'em iazyka, kak byvaet muzykal'nyi talant. I kak obladaishchii muzykal'nym talantom estestvenno sozdaet novye melodii - tak i obladiushchii lingvisticheskim talantom sozdaet novye slova. I esli eti novye slova okazyvaiutsia metkimi, vyrazitel'nymi - oni zapechatlevaiutsia v pamiati okruzhaishchikh i postepенно priobretaiut prava grazhdanstva. Put' neologizmov - estestvennyi put' razvitiia i obogashcheniia iazyka' (emphasis in the original). See 'O iazyke', op. cit., p. 84.
74Provintsializm iazyka oblagorozhen, produman. Bol'she vsego on sluzhit iarkosti, svezhesti i obraznosti, obogashchaia iazyk slovami ne primel'kavshimisia, ne zamyzgannymi - kak budto pered vami toli'ko chto otchekanennye money, a ne stertye, tusklye, dolgo khodivshie po rukam.' See A. Voronskii, 'Evgenii
48

75See 'Serapionovy brat'ia' (IV, 533-34).


78'By skaz, I mean that form of narrative prose which in its lexicon, syntax, and selection of intonations reveals an orientation toward the oral speech of the narrator (...), a form which fundamentally departs from written discourse and makes the narrator as such a real personage.' See Eikhenbaum, 'Leskov i sovremennaia proza', cited (and translated) by Shane, pp. 163-64.


81'Dans *Choses de province*, la marque de l'oralité provinciale est sensible du début a la fin (...) mais l'auteur est constamment présent, on l'a vu, dans l'organisation musicale et métaphorique du récit. Ce n'est pas un skaz "spontané" au premier degré, mais un skaz très travaillé, que l'on pourrait qualifier d'ornamental ou, de façon zamiatinienne, *synthétique*, agrégant réalisme et modernisme, style oral et style ornamental' (emphasis in the original). See Niqueux, op. cit., p. 53.

When Zamjatin says that the author must be invisible he means that the author must not manifest himself as a person, must not talk about himself, or explicitly express his own opinions on the milieu and characters he describes (....).

In this sense, in his stories (and in his entire oeuvre) the author Zamjatin is absent, never refers directly to himself. In this sense he complies fully with his own demands and remains hidden. But to a certain degree the narrator manifests himself indirectly through the use of language forms that cannot be attributed to the language system of his characters or the milieu portrayed. This is apparent already in Zamjatin's earlier skaz stories. Not so much by contrasts on the lexical and syntactic level, as by the author's use of metonymy and metaphor, especially in describing characters' (emphases in the original). See Eric de Haard, 'On Zamjatin's Narrative Art - "Lovec ělovekov"', in Voz´mi na radost´. To honour Jeanne Van der Eng-Liedmeier, Amsterdam, 1980, pp. 169-81 [p. 171].

Kuny was published in 1923 and appears in volume three of the Neimanis edition (III, 77-83) with the date given as 1922. For reasons which will become apparent in chapter one of the present thesis, it should be dated 1914-16. See the editors' note to Poludennitsa (IV, p. 23).

See V. Dal´, Tolkovyi slovar´ zhivogo velikorusskogo iazyka, eighth edition, four volumes, Moscow, 1979, vol. 2, p. 218. Henceforth, all references to Dal´s dictionary will give the volume number in Roman numerals and the page number in Arabic.

'Posle vsenoshchnoi prepolovenskoi podoshel Fedor Volkov k batiushke, k ottsu Seliverstu....' See Afrika (I, 283).

Leskov, for example, employed the word prepolovenie to mean 'half' in his story, Zapechatlennyi angel. See N. Leskov, Sobranie sochinenii, eleven volumes, Moscow, 1956-58, vol. 4, 1957, pp. 320-84 [p. 353].

Leskov, for example, employed the word prepolovenie to mean 'half' in his story, Zapechatlennyi angel. See N. Leskov, Sobranie sochinenii, eleven volumes, Moscow, 1956-58, vol. 4, 1957, pp. 320-84 [p. 353].

S. Maksimov, Krestnaia sila, first published in 1903, reprinted edition, Moscow, 1993, pp. 434-35. See also the entry under 'Prepolovenie' in Brockhaus and Efron's Entsiklopedicheskii slovar', forty one volumes, St. Petersburg, 1890-1904, vol. XXV, 1898, p. 69. Henceforth, for the sake of simplicity, this dictionary will be referred to as the Entsiklopedicheskii slovar', with the volume number given in Roman numerals.

92See Maksimov, op. cit., p. 435.

Maksimov makes great play of the fact that most people in Russia, when asked to state the significance of the feast of Prepolovenie, have no idea at all why it is celebrated: 'Prazdnik Prepoloveniiia prinadlezhit k chislu tekh, istinnoe znachenie kotorykh pochti sovershенно neponiatno dlia naroda. Dazhe liudi obrazovannogo kruga, na vopros: chto takoe Prepolovenie - otzyvaiutsia splosh' i riadom, polnym nevedeniem (....).' See ibid., p. 434.

94See the commentary compiled by Remizov for Posolon' in his Sochineniia, St. Petersburg, 1910-1912, reprinted in Munich, 1971, eight volumes, vol. 6, pp 241-70. To give just a few examples, see the following (page references to the text and notes of Posolon' are given in brackets): kupal'skie ogni (47/251), which refer to the bonfires on the St. John's Eve (Ivan Kupala, 23 June) feature prominently in Sever (I, 403); alatyrnoe (41/209), from the word alatyr', which refers to the 'white-hot stone' of Russian mythology, is used as the title for an early Zamiatin story, Alatyr' (I, 150-183); kulichki (48/249) features in the title of another early tale, Na kulichkakh (I, 184-259); kamennaia baba (214/266), an enormous stone idol of pagan origin, features in Uezdnoe (I, 86); and poludnitsa (211/265), the 'evil midday spirit', appears as a title in Zamiatin's Poludennitsa (IV, 23-45).
Remizov's own sources were the standard specialist collections of the period compiled by I. Sakharov, F. Buslaev, A. Afanas'ev, P. Bessonov, E. Anichkov, S. Maksimov, and A. Veselovskii.

This was originally published in the form of an open letter to the editors of the *Russkie vedomosti* on 6 September 1909. Cited (and translated) in Charlotte Rosenthal, 'Remizov's Sunwise and Leimonarium: Folklore in Modernist Prose', *Russian Literary Triquarterly*, 19, 1986, pp. 95-111 [pp. 95-96].


Whether they functioned as direct sources is hard to prove without more information: kulichki, for example, could well have originated with Maksimov - see 'U cherta na kulichkakh', in *Krylatye slova*, excerpts of which have been reprinted in S. Maksimov, *Izbrannoe*, Moscow, 1981, pp. 393-96.

Definitions of folklore vary. The narrow definition would be simply 'folk literature', in other words, all forms of literature transmitted orally, whether recorded or not. A broader definition, which I prefer, would include all manifestations of non-literary folklore, such as magic spells, weather lore, etc.: 'Folklore consists of all lore (knowledge, wisdom, action) transmitted by tradition (....). A brief review of recent folklore publications reveals such varied interests as cookery, costume, impudent gestures, hoaxes, children's games, song, events, and even hangover cures.' See K. W. and M. W. Clarke, *Introducing Folklore*, New York, 1963, p. 8.

Iz novykh pisatelei khorosho znaet fol'klor Gor'kii. No etimi svoimi znaniiami, po krainei mere, v 1-m i 2-m periode svoego tvorchestva, on pol'zovalsia kak-to malo i nedostatochno iskusno; chasten'ko jrecb' [my emphasis] ego geroev zvuchala fal'shivo - vse eti premudrye aforizmy... I tol'ko v 3-m periode tvorchestva
Gor’ kii po-nastoiaschemu ispol’zoval vse svoi fol’kloricheskie bogatstva; "Eralash"...’. See ‘O iazyke’, op. cit., p. 83.

102 See ibid., p. 83-84.

103 These examples are taken from the categories described in M. Arnold van Gemmer’s Manual of Contemporary Folklore, quoted in Stith Thompson, ‘Folklore and Literature’, Publications of the Modern Language Association of America, 50, 1940, pp. 861-71 [p. 867].

104 See the chapter entitled ‘U Ivanikhi’ in Uezdnoe (I, 64-65).


106 Shane, op. cit., p. 112.

107 This will be discussed in greater detail in chapter three.

108 The Bollandist scholar, Father Hippolyte Delehaye, believed that hagiographical legends were essentially the folklore of the saints. He argued that 'behind the ultimate author who puts them down in writing, there is a hidden "author", anonymous and manifold, whose memory stretches back through generations: this "author" is the masses, the people themselves. The true matter of the legend is fashioned by the mind and soul of the people, and added to, or even at times substituted for, what is authentically known of the saints.' Quoted in The Golden Legend of Jacobus de Voragine, translated and adapted from the Latin by G. Ryan and Helmut Ripperger, New York, London and Toronto, 1947, introduction, p. x. Henceforth, for the sake of simplicity, this work will be referred to simply as The Golden Legend.

109 According to the painter Iurii Annenkov, this was the phrase used by Zamiatin himself. See Annenkov, Dnevnik moikh vstrech, two volumes, New York, 1966, vol. 1, p. 266.

110 See ‘Narodnye teatr’ (IV, 424-429).


112 ‘Za poslednie gody samyi udachnyi opyt omolozeniya russkogo Petrushki sdelan v Moskve - khudozhnitsei Efimovoi i skul’ ptorom Simonovichem (....).
'Rech' idet, konechno, vovse ne ob esteticheskoi, muzeinoi rekonstruktsii: eto nikomu teper' ne nuzhno (....). Nuzho drugoe: rudu narodnogo teatra propustit' cherez mashinu professional'noi obrabotki, nuzhno otseiat' ves' nalipshii v tsarskoi kazarme, v kabake musor, nuzhno ispol'zovat' ne temy, a formy i metody narodnogo teatra, spaiav ikh s novym siuzhetom' (my emphasis). See ibid., pp. 426 & 427.
113Ibid., p. 425.
114Ibid., pp. 424-25.
CHAPTER ONE

(Tambov)

Polůdennitsa (Kuny)

According to the editors of the Neimanis edition, *Poludennitsa* is a story which was left unfinished, but nevertheless offered for the approval of the military censors at some unspecified point between the years 1914 and 1916. The manuscript, made available by Nataliia Borisovna Sollogub and published for the first time in 1988, consists of some twenty pages, along with two alternative introductions, presumably rejected. Chapter four of this story, *Kuny*, was reworked and published in 1923 with minor modifications as a self-contained entity in Lezhnev's journal, *Rossiia*; thus, interestingly, it is the only story from Zamiatin's post-revolutionary fiction which owes its existence to an idea first mooted, if not almost entirely executed, prior to 1917. It is this circumstance which justifies the examination of *Poludennitsa* and *Kuny* as early provincial stories, and for the purposes of this chapter they will be treated as an artistically uniform unit.

Alex Shane's remark that the 1923 version of *Kuny* signals 'a nostalgic return to the provincial Russia satirized in the early works' cannot be sustained in the light of the facts now known. However, unwittingly, it does touch upon an interesting facet of *Poludennitsa* and *Kuny* - namely, the enormous tonal gulf which
distinguishes them from the other tales usually lumped together into the early provincial bracket. These are all *skaz* narratives in the sense that they are written in an extremely colloquial style which attempts to render the syntax, lexicon and register of 'popular speech' (in virtually all cases, a rough-hewn and spontaneous lower-class speech); yet the stylized manner of narration is by no means their only defining characteristic. As Shane indicates, the most striking quality of these early stories is the degree of ruthless satire and comedy. Zamiatin cast a sceptical eye over provincial vulgarity and tedium, and virtually nothing and no one is spared his merciless gaze. Many of his early reviewers found this unbearably depressing. One critic, writing about *Uezdnoe* (the collection), spoke of the 'extraordinary harshness of the author's satirical inspiration'. Another correspondent drew attention to the 'repulsive, half-dead, vulgar language, depressive in its monotony and hopeless grayness.' These opinions notwithstanding, however, this period of Zamiatin's career shows striking development. The harsh vision gradually softens, moving away from the brutal and bestial perspective of, say, *Uezdnoe* (the story) towards the more colourful, vibrant and lyrical expressiveness of *Afrika* (1916). This is detectable even in tales supposedly situated within the same milieu. The negativity and nihilism is replaced by a gentler comic and ironic spirit, one which is more exuberant, celebratory and positive; the grotesqueness of the imagery is tempered and transmuted; even the harsh, grating dissonances of the language develop into something more euphonically harmonious and less shocking.
The decision to choose *Poludennitsa* and *Kuny* for analysis is motivated less by their artistic quality (the unfinished state of the former makes such a statement superfluous) than by their interest as indicators of the shift which takes place in Zamiatin's fiction between 1914 and 1916. They illustrate a newly discovered, or better to say, more consistently explored fascination with the popular imagination, especially as it pertains to rituals, songs, games and 'double-faith'. This is not to claim that the previous works are devoid of such elements: the semi-humorous portrait of the 'witch' in *Uezdnoe* has been mentioned already; and it would be possible to add the dream-books (*sonniki*), weather lore (*primety*) and love charms (*prisukhi*) so beloved of the merchant's widow, Chebotarikha (I, 41), not to mention the stylized treatment of St. Elijah's Day (I, 49-54) and the penny-thrillers (*lubochnye knizhonki*) which Baryba reads in his spare time. On the whole, these are isolated, ethnographic, realistic details: nowhere is folklore integrated into the narrative as a potential theme in its own right, or as a self-contained imaginative world with its own codes and signifiers which the 'metropolitan' reader struggles to comprehend without special guidance. In *Poludennitsa* and *Kuny*, by contrast, the rituals, customs and beliefs of the folk rarely function as pure *kolorit*; furthermore, the rituals and religious festivals depicted, as well as the allusions to popular songs and folk superstitions, are hardly ever fortuitous or artistically neutral. They carry a poetic burden, and not infrequently a symbolic significance crucial to Zamiatin's overall design. We are dealing here not merely with a naturalistic diet of the quaint and exotic - the staple fodder on which the progressive intelligentsia nurtured its hopes and
dreams of the *narod* during the second half of the nineteenth century - but with a poeticised and stylized expression of an imaginative consciousness, one composed as if by a genuine insider, against which the themes of the story are juxtaposed and elaborated.

As always with fiction which plays with the conceit of ethnographic authenticity, it is useful to know in which geographical area the story is situated. Contrary to Shane's assumptions, both *Poludennitsa* and *Kuny* are set in Tambov, not in the North. The village mentioned in both stories, Kuiman', is most likely a semi-fictional representation of a real village situated in the Izbishchensk district some fifty kilometres south of Lebedian', the small town in which Zamiatin was born and spent most of his youth; additional references in *Poludennitsa* to the villages of Kalikino and Dobroe (26), and the mention of Dankov' county in one of the introductory variants (42), would confirm such a thesis. Kuiman’'s actual status is difficult to gauge on the basis of a pre-revolutionary map: it lies on the main road linking Lebedian' and Lipetsk, and looks more like a large village or market town (*selo*) than a small village or hamlet (*derevnia*). In this context, it is worth recalling that Kuiman’ features elsewhere in Zamiatin's work: the *skaz* narrative, *Slovo predostavlaetsia tovarishchu Churyginu* (1927), which he composed in the manner of a 'mock' after-dinner speech to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the October Revolution. The speaker of the title, a 'hick' from the provinces whose grasp of Bolshevik ideology functions on the level of revolutionary jargon only, claims that Kuiman' is the name of his native village
(derevnia): he describes it as a 'backward' place, buried away amid deep forest in the middle of nowhere, miles away from any provincial town. Looking at the map, it may be suspected that this proud boast about Churygin's humble origins need not necessarily be taken at face value: it is hyperbole, clearly intended to impress upon the audience his genuine 'proletarian' credentials. Nevertheless, like Lebedian', Kuiman' plainly belongs to a semi-urban, semi-rural cultural 'space' with a provincial set of norms and patterns of behaviour, many of which may have been inspired by Zamiatin's own memories of his youth (the role played by the young priest in Poludennitsa, and the galaxy of eccentric characters employed by the local church under his care, are reminiscent of his own family background). Suffice it to say, Kuiman', whether real, or functioning merely as an ethnographic conceit, conforms to the category of location increasingly favoured in his provincial fiction - namely, the peripheral, marginalised backwater in which ancient customs, double-faith and colourful, authentic speech have remained untouched by the impact of modern civilization.

The plot of Poludennitsa covers a period spanning the beginning of the Lenten Fast (the weeks celebrating Christ's forty-day sojourn in the wilderness) and the Assumption of the Virgin Mary (15 August). The opening paragraph introduces the reader to four characters, all living together in a small house behind the local church: in the 'clean half', the priest, Father Viktor, and his young wife; and in the blackened kurnia, grandma Pelageia and the young Marinka. The exact nature of the relationship between these people is not made explicit: we presume that
Pelageia is Marinka's grandmother, and that she is employed by the priest as a cook and home-help, but nothing is said on the subject of the young girl's parents. Written in the third person, the narrative concerns the growing relationship between the priest and this young girl after the deaths of both the grandmother and the priest's wife. Marinka develops what appears to be a maternal, protective attitude towards the young man as he desperately mourns his wife's death and wrestles with the implications for his faith, but this soon develops into an obsessive and sexual passion. Such a love is destined never to be consummated, since an Orthodox priest in these circumstances would never have been permitted by the authorities to remarry. Nevertheless, as Father Viktor's faith begins to wane, its source of strength dampened irreparably by the tragic loss of his wife, so his moral defences begin to crumble. The climax of the narrative occurs when Marinka, having failed to elicit a response on St. Elijah's Day (July 20), confesses her sinful desires to him during the festival to celebrate the Assumption of the Virgin Mary. The narrative concludes abruptly, and ambiguously, with indications that the young girl will succeed in her aim of seducing him.

Charting the process by which Poludennitsa becomes transformed into the 1923 version of Kuny is an interesting exercise, since it illustrates the degree to which Zamiatin decided to enact a shift in dramatic focus, away from the priest figure towards his young 'folk' heroine. Essentially, by stripping away the rest of the tale and leaving only an abridged version of its fourth chapter without the final two segments, he consigned his
youthful priest to oblivion. The two draft beginnings of *Poludennitsa* show that, during these initial stages at least, Father Viktor was envisaged as the main protagonist, with Marinka very much in the background - evidence, perhaps, of Zamiatin's intention to narrate the story directly from his point of view, and therefore concentrate on his crisis of faith. Variant A, for example, starts with a letter from Father Viktor's brother, Gleb, in which he is urged to give up his cassock, return to his home town of Kazan', and 'to live for life, not for death' (40); in other words, to try to rid himself of his preoccupation with his dead wife (Father Viktor's age is given here as twenty-five). Discreet mention is also made of his sexual initiation as a young boy at the hands of his forty-year-old nanny, an experience which caused him feelings of guilt and anxiety (41). His morose conversations with the sexton, Afrikanych, produce a potentially interesting observation:

> Ved' vsiakoe nashe dvizhenie, vsiakii tsvet, slovo, ulybka - otpechatyvaetsia gde-to tam, kolebaniami kakimi-to, bol'she ved' eto nichem ne vyrazhaetsia. Ves' mir kak by odin ogromnyi kinematograf, vidimyi umershim, izredka - nam.... (42).

This is an indication, perhaps, that Zamiatin wanted to approach the painful subject of death through a mystical prism. As we know when all the variants and texts are compared, however, this does not happen. Beginning with the two alternative introductions, through the main body of *Poludennitsa*, to the version of *Kuny* published in the journal *Rossiia*, we witness the
priest's gradual erasure and relegation to the status of a marginal figure. His countenance moves from the highly individualized to the general and symbolic; indeed, identified already in *Poludennitsa* with the iconic image of Christ, by the time of *Kuny* his individuality is purged altogether and he exists purely as an embodiment of the Orthodox faith. Thus his interior world, his struggle to keep the faith and survive the death of his wife, becomes a non-existent issue, drowned out by the imaginative world and interior 'voice' of Marinka.

Zamiatin's reason for changing tack and approaching his subject through the eyes of a young woman can only be speculated upon, although it is the first example of such a narrative in his fiction. One explanation may have been a growing fascination with the sheer force and vitality of the world which Marinka herself represents. This process can already be seen at work in *Poludennitsa* by the extent to which the narrative voice and point of view merge with her own; indeed, it is signalled at the very beginning of the story with an extraordinarily arresting portrait of her grandmother, a woman who dominates her early years and, we are told, is influential in forging her imaginative outlook. The relevant passage is a stylistic *tour de force* and well worth quoting in full:

'Ekh, babushka! Da nikoli ee Marinke ne zabyt'. Skazochnitsa, pribautnitsa, striapukha - u samogo Kuimanskogo barina takoi, podi, netu. Shan'gi kakie pekla, zaspenniki, ovydniki, pirozhenniki - ekh! A skazki.... Byvalo, zimoi na dvore morosiaka liutyi, brevna treshchat, a tut, v
This is a celebratory piece of writing, the like of which cannot be found in any of Zamiatin's stories prior to this moment; moreover, although it may well reflect the rich influence of Zamiatin's own grandmother on his own education, it is more than merely a nostalgic recollection of an old woman as transmitter of folklore. Its strategic position within the text as a whole, along with the several references to actual folktales and the careful manner in which the world of tale-telling is evoked, ensures that the passage will be read as a poetic trope for Zamiatin's own story-telling technique. The wonderfully inventive image of the grandmother pulling her needle and thread 'around the ear' (krug ukha) is a clever, visual approximation of the action of sewing which can also be interpreted in the context as a trope for oral narration, or skaz, in other words, a pattern of sound quite

63
literally 'woven around the ear'. This trope draws attention to the intimate relationship between speaker and audience necessary for the telling of tales, and the importance of sound generally to the success of the story; indeed, the depiction of the entire scene, with its freezing frosts outside and cosy warmth inside, is an archetypal evocation of the folktale-telling world. Interesting, also, is the degree to which the narratorial voice appears to identify with this world, at times giving the impression that it is blending with Marinka's own interior monologue: the colloquial tone and register of the language (the repeated use of the exclamatory ekh!); the persistent use of diminutives; the regional dialect (vedmed' instead of medved'); the illusion of shared participation;\textsuperscript{19} and the seeming disavowal of authorial omniscience all suggest a provisional sharing of viewpoint between author-narrator and fictional character.\textsuperscript{20}

In several key respects, the description of grandma Pelageia in the opening paragraph of \textit{Poludennitsa} has an important bearing on the ensuing narrative. She is a great teller of tales (\textit{skazochnitsa} [23]), and a walking dictionary of proverbs, sayings and pithy observations - in short, a \textit{pribautnitsa} (23).\textsuperscript{21} She is also an expert on portents and omens, able to tell the meaning of an icon falling off the wall and the significance of a 'chicken crowing like a cock' (23).\textsuperscript{22} The contents of the old trunk which contain all her special personal belongings, one which Marinka inspects after she has died, suggest some sort of faith-healer or herbal doctor (\textit{znakharka})\textsuperscript{23}. There are various objects with 'healing' properties in this trunk, some of them purely medicinal; but there are others which are applied as antidotes to various
forms of 'maleficium' (porcha), the significance of which Marinka herself is not fully aware. The ten dried 'mosquitoes' (koramora), applied as a cure for malarial fever (likhomanka), are probably for medicinal purposes only; on the other hand, the other herbs present, such as the alateinyi and kupyryyi roots, not to mention several others which Marinka does not recognise, may well have magical properties. The narrator's revelation that grandma Pelageia 'knew all the evil charms and love charms' ('vse priguby da prisukhi vedala' [25]) is intriguing: the first refers to a knowledge of incantations which cause harm, potentially even death; while the second alludes to a range of charms known only by witches and sorcerers. The suspicion arises that there is a darker dimension to her character than appears to be the case at first sight. There is a strong hint in these opening lines that the old woman's dabbling in magic may ultimately have led to her downfall, or made her the victim of someone else's maleficium. She disappears mysteriously the day before Forgiveness Day (Proshchen den [24]), having left to go outside for a bucket of water from the well, and is later found dead in a ravine some distance away with the bucket by her side. The narrator, indirectly expressing Marinka's thoughts, observes that this object may have played an important role in this strange occurrence: 'nado byt' - ne bez nego tut delo oboshlos' (24); moreover, a little while later, after the priest's wife has died from an inexplicable fever, the author-narrator records the local rumour that the priest's house has become 'cursed' - 'napushcheno eto bylo na popov dvor' (24) - an allusion to the practice of 'spoiling'. Pelageia's disappearance thus comes to appear in a new and sinister light.
Marinka's strong attachment to her grandmother - understandably, she is much more upset about her death than the subsequent loss of the priest's wife - is extremely significant within the context of this opening section: it establishes her symbolic kinship with the old woman and serves as a displaced indicator of her own imaginative world. This world clearly belongs to the realm of double-faith, one characteristic of the peasantry in the nineteenth century which involved the simultaneous belief in the Orthodox faith and supernatural spirits. Marinka and her grandmother belong to a group of characters exhibiting this tendency in the story - most amusingly, the inebriated Afrikanych during the final hours of St. Elijah's Day (37) - and it is important to realise that the hold of Orthodox religion on all is tenuous. The symbolic division of the house, with its 'clean half' reserved for the priest and his wife, while the 'dirty half' is inhabited by Marinka and her grandmother, encourages a reading of the text in terms of the deliberate juxtaposition of two imaginative worlds, one rooted solidly in Orthodox Christianity, and the other in folk superstition, with both blending and merging confusingly into one another. Herein lies the central conceit of the narrative: concealed among these seemingly random revelations about Marinka's grandmother lies a pattern of meaning which revolves around 'spoiling' and 'incitement to love', and offers a parallel, 'folk' explanation for the amorous folly which ensues. It is an axiom of this perspective, moreover, anticipated by the early mention of icons falling off walls, that the illicit and forbidden love of Marinka for the priest is the result of some kind of 'malevolent' intervention, one which
causes them to act immorally in the eyes of the church; and as this perspective unfolds, Marinka herself is transformed symbolically into the malevolent 'mid-day spirit', or *poludennitsa*, of the story's title.

Marinka's obsessional relationship with the priest takes place against a background of concern about marriage and the prospects of finding a future husband (*suzhenyi*). As was customary in rural communities, these thoughts are linked symbolically with the arrival of spring and the start of the festive season. As Marinka emerges from church on the ninth day after a remembrance service held for her grandmother, an indication that this is the second day of Catkin Week (*Verbnaia nedelia*), she espies the first rook of spring. Her thoughts move naturally to the launch of the festive season: the painting of eggs, the swinging on swings (activities associated with Easter Week and the weeks which follow), and then the round dance season, which is said to begin in Kuiman' during *Rusal'naia nedelia*, in other words, the week leading up to Trinity Sunday (*Troitsyn den*).

Her youthful mind looks forward in ambiguous anticipation to the meeting of her intended:

Devich'iu l' serdtsu gorevat', kogda suzhenyi vperedi: khudo, kogda suzhenyi est' - proshchai devich'ia volia, - khudo, kogda milyi ne liubit - proshchai suzhenyi (24-25).

A crucial episode in the acquisition of her intended occurs when Marinka is visited by the neighbouring match-maker, Petrovna, who has waddled over to the house on hearing that the young girl
has discovered three 'chicken gods' (kurich'i bogi) formerly belonging to her grandmother. Typically for rural matchmakers, Petrovna is something of an 'old witch': she is described as a staraia iaga (a reference to Baba iaga, the wicked witch of Russian fairy-tales) and a koldun'ia (sorceress), and for good measure we are referred to a kila - the size of a nut on her forehead, which she conceals beneath her headscarf. Petrovna is thought to want these stones in order to work some 'evil magic' (nagovory) of her own. She tries to bargain with Marinka, offering in exchange a drug which will make her 'intended' fall in love with her:

- Koli dash', devushka, odnogo bozhka - i ia tebe snadob'ia dam takogo, chto s nim zhivo suzhenogo svoego obrataesh'.
  A suzhenyi- to molod, prigozh, na popa pokhozh (29).

This revelation shocks and intrigues Marinka: being clairvoyant (the gift of second sight is allegedly possessed by all witches and sorcerers in Russia), Petrovna seems to have guessed Marinka's secret attraction to the priest; more to the point, she has hinted that Father Viktor is indeed her 'intended'. Marinka is angry that her secret has been divined. She refuses to give Petrovna any of the stones, and despatches her firmly from the house, although she decides not to strike her because it would be tempting fate. Nevertheless, the seed of hope and conviction has been firmly planted in her mind. The cackling Petrovna waddles off with an ambiguous warning - '"nu, smotri, devushka"' (29) - and as Marinka returns into the house a jug crashes off the wall, whether as a good omen or ill is not clear. '"Neuzhto suzhenyi? Da
ved’ - im nel’zia.” (29), she says to herself immediately afterwards, wondering how it would be possible for her to marry a priest whose first wife has died in wedlock.

Marinka's initial reaction to Petrovna's prediction is to pray before a holy icon of Jesus Christ, asking that she be saved from the 'midday demon' - 'Gospodi, spasi ot besa poludennogo i sriashcha' (30); yet the image of the ancient icon moves in the dark because of the flickering candle by which it is illuminated and Marinka sees instead the head of Father Viktor. An irresistible and malevolent force seems to be taking hold of her, and the theme of love as the fulfilment of 'evil' prophecy is spurred into motion as a possible explanation for the ensuing events. At the heart of this nexus lies the word of the title - poludennitsa - which has some interesting nuances, depending on the context. According to Dal', it means a fatal fever contracted in the middle of the day (likhoradochka v polden’), a common enough occurrence in rural Russia and one recalling the fever which kills Father Viktor's wife at the beginning of the story. In areas like Tambov, however, poludennitsa was simply another term for rusalka, since it was widely believed that the most dangerous time of day to encounter this supernatural being was in the middle of the day or night. Intriguingly, both senses are interwoven into the fabric of the text (see in this context the use of this word in Uezdnoe). There is an obvious analogy between the intensifying heat of the summer months and the growing intensity of Marinka's feelings towards Father Viktor, a parallel reinforced by images which juxtapose the 'chasteness' of night against the 'wantonness' of midday (incidentally, an interesting
reversal of the usual poetic opposition). It is during the silent humidity of noon, when she and the priest disappear to their respective rooms for a rest, separated only by a partition wall, that Marinka succumbs to her most intense desires:

Zhutkaia, zharkaia, poludennaia tishina ne strashnee li tikhoi polnochi? Polnoch' - monakhinia, spriatavshaia pod chernoi skufeikoi zharkii blik molodykh glaz svoikh; polden' - monakhinia, sbrosivshaia s sebia chernye pokryvala, raskryvshaia shiroko glaza i guby. Rasve ne strashna krasnogubaia, zhadnaia zhenshchina? (30).

The possibility that Marinka, like the mythical rusalka, is a potential 'undoer' of the male sex has been indicated earlier by her grandmother, who was fond of reminding her while she was still alive that it is a bad sign to have eyebrows meeting in the middle: 'Okh, ne liubi nikogo, Marinka - odnogo poliubish' i togo pogubish' (25). As Marinka becomes ever more feverishly obsessed, so she adopts the tactics of the archetypal femme fatale, rushing into the priest's room with the buttons of her shirt deliberately undone, seeking to arouse him. This is followed by several passages in which she herself is associated with the idea of the midday heat and the poludennitsa:

Valitsia vse iz ruk, slushaet, stisnuvshi zuby, shepchet chto-to i stanovitsia sama poludennoi (30).

Then, at the moment she decides to confess her sins personally to Father Viktor, Marinka recalls the words of her song during the
round-dance and has a vision of the 'shameless' spirits whirling around in the mid-day heat:

Zheltye, goriache polia iskhodiat sukhim znoem. V'iuscia
nad poliami besstydnye poludennitsy, shevelia nozdriami,
kak sobaki, vtiagivaia znoinyi, veshchauishii grozu vozdukh
(39).

Finally, during the actual confession, the metamorphosis is complete:

Nel'zia smotret' - eto pervoe - i podnimaet na nee otets
Viktor glaza: priamo pered nimi - iaraia poludennitsa,
pyshet, guby raskryty' (40).

It is symptomatic that the priest's last attempt to resist her involves pressing his cross against her lips.42

Poludennitsa is the first so-called ' obsession text' in Zamiatin's fiction, a text which seeks to explore the lives of people possessed by an idea or another person, 'living on the edge' in a state of delirium, ready to hurl themselves into the 'abyss'.43 Undeniably, the superstitious version of Marinka's transmutation into a hissing spirit (this 'hissing' looks back to the folk-style vedmed of the second paragraph) and the use of folklore generally is primarily a literary conceit. It offers a parallel, folk 'reading' of an obsessive love which would have been considered sinful and illicit by the local community. Such a polemical theme is common enough in Zamiatin's work, and may be compared to the
seduction of Mrs Craggs in *Lovets chelovekov*. At the same time, it is the tremendous vitality of this conceit, and the degree to which the narrator seems ready to identify with it, which lends the story much of its interest. We may only speculate as to why Zamiatin abandoned this narrative, but it should be recognised that Marinka is the only peasant girl in his fiction whose imaginative world is explored in any significant depth, to the extent where the text, in several instances, seems to voice her thoughts directly. When Zamiatin came to edit chapter four of this story for publication in the early twenties, this process was propelled even further forward; yet by this time the story described a world which no longer existed: revolution, civil war and famine had intervened to alter the province of Tambov and Lebedian beyond recognition (Zamiatin intimates the severity of this shock in a letter to Remizov from Lebedian, dated September 1918, although this was prior to moves on the part of the local Soviet to throw his mother out of the family home, presumably for being the widow of a priest).^44

*Kuny* (1923)

For reasons best known to himself, Zamiatin decided against publishing *Poludennitsa* as a fully-fledged story in his lifetime, even though it had been passed by the military censors. We may speculate that at some time in 1922 Zamiatin again took up work on the manuscript and decided that it was publishable, but only in radically revised form. With this in mind, he removed the *Kuny* section from the *Poludennitsa* manuscript, pared away the
final two sections which describe the Festival of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary and the confrontation between Marinka and the priest, and introduced specific alterations to the remaining text. These modifications are virtually insignificant from the artistic point of view, and seem to have been undertaken purely in order to establish the text as a self-contained fragment: the heroine's name is switched from Marinka to Mar'ka; three lines are deleted from the passage at the beginning of the tale describing the major feast-days preceding St. Elijah's Day (one of them, Prepolovenie, is technically out of sequence); a new passage making explicit Mar'ka's obsession with the parish priest is inserted into the account of the morning service; and a later passage in which Mar'ka returns home briefly to prepare supper for the priest in the evening before slipping out again to rejoin Iasha Grebenshchikov is omitted, thereby concealing all references to the priest's domestic relationship with her. Apart from this, the published version of Kuny dating from 1923 reflects in every way the themes, artistic design, narrative technique, spirit and folk imagery of the draft version written between 1914 and 1916.

Taken as a self-contained fragment, the text of Kuny published in the journal Rossiia charts a day in the life of Kuiman', the main focus of the narrative being the obsessional, passionate love of a young teenage girl, Mar'ka, for the village priest. The day in question is St. Elijah's Day, an 'altar-day', or prestol'nyi prazdnik, in this particular rural community, and one with a symbolic resonance for the Russian peasantry as a whole. The inhabitants are shown celebrating in traditional fashion. There is a service
held at the local Orthodox church in the morning conducted by
the parish priest, followed in the afternoon by games and round-
dances on the village common, an age-old pastime performed
primarily by the young girls of the community throughout the
spring and summer months. In the morning, Mar´ka is shown
praying before an icon of Jesus Christ, her concentration fixed
squarely on the priest holding the eucharist, evidently in the
hope of some indication, however small, that her feelings may be
reciprocated. After the service, disappointed that she has been
ignored, Mar´ka reluctantly joins her friends for the dance
celebrations. Quickly, she succumbs to the spontaneity, vitality
and energy of the occasion. Whirled around and intoxicated by
the heat of the sun, she performs a teasingly erotic dance before
the local blacksmith, Iasha Grebenschchikov - partly, we suspect,
to avenge the fact that the real object of her passion has snubbed
her. Out of caprice, she is tempted to succumb to her handsome
partner and thus arranges a rendezvous with him for later in the
evening; she thinks better of this idea, however, and reprimands
him when he tries to take advantage of her. The day ends as
sadly as it began: Mar´ka's love remains unrequited, she is unable
to accept a substitute for the true object of her passion, and her
life remains balanced precariously between conflicting wishes
and desires.

As a lubok stylization, Kuny is a good example of the devices
enshrined in Zamiatin's lectures on the art of creative writing.
Prominent is the conceit of 'authenticity', whereby the implicit
narrator insinuates to the reader his thorough familiarity with
the local milieu - its language, customs and mores. The
announcement that St. Elijah's Day is Kuiman’s *prestol’nyi prazdnik* (77), a term used to denote the feast-day of the saint to whom the local church had been consecrated, suggests more than a nodding acquaintance with the district. So, too, does the recording in meticulous detail of the traditional costumes worn by the peasant women who have travelled from the satellite village of Korovinsk to attend the service: the headdresses studded with silver coins, the silk veils, the woollen skirts and sarafans, homespun with blue wool, red gussets, fringes and detailed patterns - costumes 'handed down from generation to generation' and worn especially for the occasion (78). Further naturalistic detail is supplied during the description of the market: the edible items, such as the spicy cakes (*zharni* [79]) and poppy-seed cakes covered in treacle (*makovniki* [79]); the toys made for small children - the slate-grey, laminated *aspidnye doski* [77]), clay whistles (*glinianye svistul’ki* [79]), and the boxes made out of birch-bark (*berestianye korobki* [79]); and the raffish, gypsy horse-dealers, a standard topographical detail from the area around Lebedian. The author-narrator impresses further with his colloquial syntax, lexicon and spelling, including region-specific dialect: *kuleberda* (possibly a local variant of *beliberda* [79]), *paneva* (a woollen skirt forming part of the traditional peasant costume [78]), *vykmarivat’* (deriving, presumably, from *komar’* [78]), *razvymnaia* ('boisterous' or 'capable' [79]), and *gomon* ('noise', 'hub-bub' [79]). Many of these words are associated with the South, if not directly with the province of Tambov itself.
A key word in this context, one with a resonance far beyond the merely exotic, is the title-word of the story itself. In the singular, with the stress on the second syllable, *kuná* is given by Dal' as an alternative for the word *kunítsa*, or 'marten', the small, weasel-like animal valued in Russia and America for its fur. Hence its function as a term traditionally used during matchmaking ceremonies to refer to the bride and its appearance, not only in betrothal speeches, but in Russian wedding songs generally (especially in the South, where the bride and groom are often described metaphorically as a 'black marten' and 'sable').

According to the folklore specialist M. Zabylin, this practice had its origins in ancient history, during a time when fur was the main unit of currency and therefore a measure of quality and worth. The parents of the bride in question often demanded 'marten-fur' as a price for giving their daughter's hand in marriage; moreover, the phrase 'virgin marten' (*devich' e kunichnóe*) or 'wedding marten' (*svadebnaia kunítsa*) were common expressions in Europe and Russia to denote the (compensatory) tax which feudal lords levied on newly-wedded women if they were marrying into another demesne. This custom was still not unknown in certain parts of Russia at the end of the nineteenth century, and there is evidence, certainly on the basis of Zamiatin's story, that the word *kuná* had retained its traditional connection with the custom of betrothal, at least as far as the province of Tambov was concerned, even as late as the twentieth century. Certainly, it is useful to bear this etymological history in mind when reading the text.
Both implicitly and explicitly, Kuny is a narrative in which anxiety about marriage and the prospects of securing a partner are ever-present in the consciousness of the heroine. In the opening paragraph, the word is introduced as a local variant for the term khorovod (77), or round-dance, a folk ritual which played an important role in rural communities as far as courtship was concerned. Symbolically, the St. Elijah round-dances (Il’inskie kuny ) are Mar’ka’s last opportunity to secure a partner, or she will remain single until the beginning of the round-dance season next year. Interestingly, this ritual is described in enough detail to make it possible to identify its main characteristics. Initially, all the 'old maids' (devushki-vekovushki [79]) in the village, dressed solemnly with black headscarves around their heads, walk out on to the village common, form their own circle and sing so-called 'remembrance songs' (pominki [79]).

Then, all the young unmarried girls and 'widows' whose husbands had been conscripted for a period of 20-30 years depending on the period are fighting or have died at the front (nemuzhnye zhény-soldatki [79]), all with red headscarves around their heads, step out on to the common and form a circular palisade to defend themselves against their 'sweet seducers'. In the middle of this ring, the so-called 'marten city' (kunnyi gorod ), stands Mar’ka, the proud 'princess' (tsarevna ). She launches the dancing with a humorous ditty, throwing down a challenge to those 'outside the city' to enter, and commanding the local blacksmith to be crowned her 'prince'. She then switches to another song - 'U nas v gorode tsarevna, tsarevna...' - after which another two lines referring to the choosing of girls and the waving of handkerchiefs are quoted. The kunnyi krug whirls faster and faster, the young smith orders the participants to stop, and is permitted to enter the ring.
Mar’ka is waiting for him. There follows a teasing, erotic dance which builds up towards a climax before the sequence abruptly halts, shifting to a quieter moment later in the evening when the couple are alone together.

Although there were different kinds of round dance game in rural Russia, varying in terms of composition, song and performance, the kunnyi krug in all probability was the sort of popular game (igra) which symbolically reenacted the rituals of courtship and betrothal. It is well-known that the various stages of the marriage process, some of them dramatic spectacles with well-established and ritualized patterns of behaviour, were popular among the ordinary people of Russia as subjects for entertainment; in particular, this applied to round-dances and the various games associated with them. One such game, recounted by V. Kallasha and N. Efros in their pre-revolutionary history of the Russian theatre, bears a striking resemblance to the spectacle Zamiatin describes in Kuny:

'Tak, naprimer, v igre, izobrazhaiushchei vybor nevesty, v pesne poetsia o tom, kak zhenikh podstupaet pod kamennyi gorod, razbivaet steny i vyvodit krasnu devitsu; izobrazhaiushchii zhenikha v eto vremia khodit mezhdu dvumia riadami devushek, vybivait u nikh iz ruk platki i, nakonets, beret odnu iz nikh za ruku i uvodit s soboiu. Vybrav takim obrazom nevestu, molodets obrashchaetsia k sosediam s rasprosam o nei. Okazyvaetsia, chto "sosedushki-sobratushki" ne khvaliat ee; togda on vybiraet
A similar dance type is mentioned by Vladimir Propp in his introduction to a recent edition of Russian popular songs and ballads, many of them reprinted from nineteenth-century collections. According to Propp, the peasant khorovod was frequently depicted in terms of a 'town' or 'city' (gorod), with the performance involving a male person outside who is challenged by the female participants to break through the 'wall' or 'gate' in order to acquire a prize within; normally, this took the form of a young, unmarried girl. One song to which Propp refers in connection with this spectacle was recorded by the composer Milyi Balakirev some fifty years before Zamiatin in a region not very far from Kuiman', and included in his famous collection of popular songs; in addition, the famous nineteenth-century collection of Sobolevskii contained a series of song-variants which accompany a similar type of 'courtship game'. Although none of them match exactly the word sequence of Zamiatin's second song, this should not prevent us from confidently placing the St. Elijah-day ritual within a similar type of category: the initial mention of the vekovushki, with their sad lament, establishes the theme of securing and keeping a husband; the opening lines of Mar'ka's first song, with its allusions to 'enemies' and 'purses of gold', metaphorically refers to the prospect of attracting (i.e. 'fighting') a rich husband; the opening lines of her second song borrow from the imagery of the standard song 'type' (gorod, tsarevna, tsarev syn, and so on); the actions of the dance, although not depicted in exact, anthropological detail, accord generally with
the movements as discussed by Propp; the two lines from the second song quoted - '(...) on iz tysiachi liubuiu vybiraet,/On i belym platochkom makhaet...' (80) - echo the act of choosing a bride outlined by Kallasha and Efros; lastly, the author-narrator's use of the verb *otdat'*(80) in the sense of 'to give away', as in 'to give someone's hand in marriage', is symptomatic. It is not inconceivable that Zamiatin had witnessed the *kunnyi krug* himself and recorded its main features for artistic reworking later.69

*Kuny* is an excellent illustration of how a single, key word can trigger a series of specific resonances within a given text, resulting both in irony and pathos. Part of the pathos of the story undoubtedly derives from the immense importance of the *khorovod* as a social/romantic ritual within the typical rural community; in other words, as a means for teenagers of both sexes to meet, become acquainted and ultimately get married in accordance with the highly conservative and rigorous codes of conduct observed at the time.70 It is also contingent to the tremendous gravity with which marriage itself was regarded by both young women and men generally in these communities - as one scholar has commented recently: 'Other than birth and death, marriage constituted the most important event in the lives of Russian peasants'.71 To employ a round-dance in the form of a betrothal game, especially one which is the very last of the festive season, lends Mar'ka's dilemma a certain dramatic urgency.72 She becomes powerfully established in the reader's mind as a young girl on the threshold of womanhood, concerned perhaps with securing a partner, and anxious about the prospect
of remaining single (the possible writing of this story during war-time, when the flower of Russian youth was being desecrated at the front, may be an important background factor). It also provides an ironic commentary on her failure, or reluctance, to accept a partner other than the one on whom her heart is set. Blacksmiths like Iasha Grebenshchikov figure prominently in popular romantic songs and wedding songs, largely as a result of their profession: to 'forge a wedding' (kovat' svad'bu) was a standard expression in rural Russia. The 'marriage' which Mar'ka has symbolically turned down is poignantly echoed during the scene in which she bursts into tears at the end of an emotional day - her 'groom', Iasha, suddenly showers her with unwanted kisses, described by the author-narrator as a svadebnyi khmel' (82), an expression which refers more conventionally to the drunken high spirits at a wedding. Furthermore, in order to understand the gravity of her 'refusal', it is worth reminding ourselves of the disgrace and ignominy with which women were viewed in the peasant community if they did not manage to find themselves a suitable partner at the right age.

The khorovod was a standard feature of peasant life and is depicted in both lubok engravings and the work of professional painters interested in popular rural themes. Zamiatin's treatment of the round-dance theme in Kuny is a more joyful, sensuous and earthy affair than the rose-cheeked, but wooden and surprisingly sombre versions offered by peasant engravers and their academic imitators. Paradoxically, since the round-dance reflected a pattern of social relationships in which women were more or less passive spectators in the negotiations which decided
their fate, Zamiatin accurately conveys the mood of the rural event and celebrates the mixed khorovodnaia igra as an implicitly sexual ritual, one which he juxtaposes with the passionless rituals of the Church. The pagan undercurrents, in many respects mirroring the manner in which Thomas Hardy uses Stonehenge as a background for romantic frolicking in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, are never far from the surface. The dance itself, possibly reflecting the influence of Stravinskii's *Rite of Spring* (1913), is portrayed as a semi-Dionysian, sexual frenzy, and in several ways anticipates the explicitly erotic imagery of *Lovets chelovekov* ('tortoise-houses' dancing a slow khorovod around the gigantic stone phallus of Nelson's Column). In common with this later story, the golden orb of the sun functions as a symbol of Bacchanalian energy, intoxication and fertility. It is equated with the round-dance itself, an allusion perhaps to the belief prevalent at the turn of the century that the round-dance developed historically from pagan cults of fertility worship.

There is a verbal echo connecting the lyrical images of the very first line of *Kuny* to the song with which Mar´ka launches her performance, an echo which suggests that while Mar´ka represents the fields of wheat awaiting harvest, the 'desirable enemy' with the 'purse of gold' is none other than the sun itself:

Vse vyshe vzmyvaet solntse, vse besposhchadnei. Vorokha luchei nasypany v rzhanom pole - rozh´ stoit złotaja, zharkaja, i tikhon´ko, materinski-dovol´no kolyshet kolos´ia (77)

This is followed later by:

82
The acceleration of the dance, the intensifying heat and the giddiness caused by the relentless spinning are all strongly emphasized. Mar'ka herself is whipped into a sexual frenzy by the dancing, ready to yield herself to anyone; so, too, is Iasha, who enters the ring and is instantly intoxicated by the sight of her nipples pushing firmly through the material of her red jacket. The dance ends with the promise of final consummation as Mar'ka teases Iasha with her open lips and shoulders: like the pine trees, the couple are described as ready to uproot and throw themselves down on to the 'hot grass' - unfortunately, not a genuine possibility bearing in mind the strict conventions of the time.

Mar'ka's basic dilemma is that her natural inclinations do not accord with the precepts of the church. It is another ironic paradox that the restraint which she displays in church - remarked upon by her friends as uncharacteristic (78) - is symbolically paralleled by the absence of rain during the course of the day. Central to this paradox, and to the idea that Mar'ka and the community are 'punished' for her illicit passion, is the folk-religious symbolism associated with St. Elijah's Day. This was one of the most important religious festivals for the rural population of Russia in the nineteenth century and normally one of the hottest days of the year; it was also a day on which
tremendous heat was expected to build up, before eventually bursting in the form of powerful storms. This gave rise to the notion that St. Elijah was the mythical personification of sun, thunder, lightning and rain. In the folk imagination, the wrathful prophet of the Old Testament became intermeshed with the 'Sun-God' of pagan myth: commentators spoke of his 'golden chariot' careering across the skies, releasing bolts of lightning and causing death and destruction wherever he went, as a result of which it was forbidden to work in the fields on St. Elijah's Day or do anything 'sinful' which would provoke his anger. At the same time, paradoxically, the prophet was also venerated as the giver of rain for the harvest. In Kuny, the absence of rain and storms to puncture the humidity, an unusual event mentioned twice by the narrator, carries ironic implications. It is the poetic equivalent of Mar'ka's unrequited passion: Elijah's 'withholding' of rain is analogous to the priest's 'withholding' of love, an idea reinforced when the author-narrator compares Mar'ka's lips to the parched earth (as the crops lack rain in order to ripen in time for the harvest, so Mar'ka languishes without love). Simultaneously, it can be viewed as divine punishment for her pagan 'sinning'. This is the view of Afrikanych, the giant sexton whom Mar'ka encounters on her way to her night-time rendezvous and who blames the absence of rain on her 'dancing' and 'high spirits'. The irony lies in the fact that Mar'ka's supposed misdemeanour is not the conventional one of an improper rendezvous with a local beau, but the less obvious, because concealed 'sin' of harbouring passionate thoughts about the local priest.
Mar´ka can be compared to several young women in Zamiatin's fiction who desperately feel the need for passionate fulfilment and do not shirk from expressing it, even if they are ultimately unsuccessful in evoking a reciprocal response. This urge was the expression of a powerful instinct which Zamiatin considered healthy and natural for people born in rural communities, one which seemed to preoccupy him greatly throughout his fiction, possibly because he and his wife were unable to have children.89

His characters are not complex beings with sophisticated, interior worlds, and should not be treated as such; on the contrary, they are stylized representations which have more in common with lubok 'types' than the subtle and intricately elaborated personalities of the realist tradition. It is worth pointing out, nevertheless, that Zamiatin's 'types' possess certain noteworthy features. Like Mar´ia in Kriazhi, Mar´ka is a combination of strength in adversity and vulnerability, a young woman who exhibits both sexual predatoriness and romantic longing. She is a zateinitsa and zadornitsa (78), nouns with a strong folk resonance which refer to an impish sense of fun, an argumentative, quarrelsome nature and an ardent, fervent spirit, all of which ill lends itself to the straightjacket of conventional religion.90 She is also the 'lead singer' in the round-dance (zapevala [78]), an indication of her musical knowledge, talent and extrovert temperament, but also of her prominent position within the hierarchy of young women in the village.91 Mar´ka does not conform to the two main stereotypes of the peasant woman (baba) as adumbrated in nineteenth century literature: the 'noble', 'virtuous' and 'pathetic' type of the sentimental tradition, often a helpless victim of external machination, a sort of
Russian-style 'Tess of the D'Urbervilles';\textsuperscript{92} and the 'harpy' or 'virago' figure, herself the source of evil, and supposedly responsible for the break-up of the male hierarchy in the village.\textsuperscript{93} To be sure, there are elements of the coquettish \textit{femme fatale} about Mar'ka, suggested by the manner in which she sexually teases the young blacksmith only to refuse him later, but these aspects of her personality are treated by Zamatin as positive, liberating and challenging. Yet she is not without vulnerability, and thus pathos - as we have seen, the story ends on a downcast, dispirited and defeated note, with the long year until the next St. Elijah's Day stretching out before her.

Part of the reason Mar'ka does not conform to these stereotypes is that she is too young. Zamatin opts for another symbolic context altogether in order to evoke the pathos of her situation, namely, that of the water-spirit (\textit{rusalka}) of Russian folk mythology. In the first paragraph, a lyrical introduction ostensibly belonging to the voice of the author-narrator, the peculiar pathos of St. Elijah's Day is viewed through the prism of folk superstition:

\begin{quote}
Za Kuimanskim lesom prud ves' zaros temnoi zelen'iu, iz pruda po nocham vykhodiat rusalki i naprolet, do utra, zalomivshi ruki, toskuiut na beregu; uzh pozdno, otoshlo ikh vremia, proshla Rusaloch'ia nedelia, ne uspeli zaluchit' sebe parnia, devushkami ostanutsia eshe na tselyi god. Odna nadezhda na Il'inskie kuny: zakruzhatsia parni v kunykh krugakh, zavikhriot ikh devki, zaputaet v serebianuiu
\end{quote}
In retrospect, it becomes obvious that this is a poeticisation of Mar´ka's dilemma. Having left the church in the morning, Mar´ka and her friends encounter a drunken old man on his way back to the village, and whirl him around, pinching him and giggling 'like a rусalka' (79). When Mar´ka issues her challenge to her 'prince' to step forward, this is described as 'casting her devious nets' ('закидывать хитрые сети' [79]), an echo of the first paragraph cited above. Her sexual teasing of her male opponent is capricious, tormenting and rусalka-like: 'Ekh, потешит сиakhot nad etim, zamuchit', zashchekotat po rusalochi' (80). By evening, the narrative perspective blurs as the action is viewed through the eyes of the drunken sexton, Afrikanych, taking on a dream-like quality: he accuses Mar´ka of secretly disappearing to participate in a rusalochii khorovod (81); and as she and Lasha walk across the common together, her voice is described as malicious, 'like that of a rусalka' (82). Finally, when the narrative closes with a restatement of the original refrain - the rусalki sit crying among the branches, wringing their hands in despair at having failed in their search for a partner (82) - the reader is left in little doubt that this refers to Mar´ka and her sense of disappointment with the day's events.

Legends about rусalki were infinitely varied in Russia, reflecting as they did different sensibilities and traditions. According to superstitions prevalent in the south, the water-nymph was a beautiful, ethereal being, often dressed in white, who inhabited
ponds, rivers and woods - the Russian equivalent of the Greek naiad, the German undine, and the French ondine. According to the folklore specialist D. K. Zelenin, she was viewed by peasants as a 'spirit of the unclean dead', i.e. a young girl who had either drowned or committed suicide, or the ghost of an infant who had been still-born or died before being christened. There was a very rich store of fabulates concerning the malevolent activities of this spirit in the folk imagination, even as late as the turn of the century. According to tradition, the rusalki emerged from the water during celebrations to welcome the onset of spring, and then moved into the fields and woods during the summer. During their period of greatest activity, i.e. Rusal'naiinedel'ia, the week leading up to Trinity Sunday, they were considered particularly dangerous: emerging from their pools by the light of the moon, they were alleged to sit on the banks, combing their hair, singing enchanting songs, and dancing their round-dances in the hope of luring unwary travellers into their midst and drowning them; occasionally, they swung on the branches of trees, whispering to each other, giggling, crying, and lamenting their unhappy fate.

In the popular imagination, they were dangerous beings in league with 'unclean forces', femmes fatales who combined beauty and treachery in equal measure. Certain communities believed that if a rusalka could deceive a village lad into marrying her, then she would miraculously regain human form.

Zamiatin's exploitation of the folk-myth in connection with Mar'ka is striking for the absence of any overtly Romantic conceit. His description is stripped of the sort of enchantment and mystery which accompanies the theme in Romantic literature -
for example, in Nikolai Gogol’s *Maiskaia noch*. On the contrary, although appealing to a sense of pathos, the tone of the narrative voice in these opening lines of *Kuny* is without significant embellishment, almost as if the lore of the region were being imparted for the sake of historical record. This matter-of-factness gives rise to the suspicion that this is Mar’ka’s voice speaking, or the thoughts of her mind being echoed indirectly.

Zelenin himself drew attention to the way in which the *rusalka* myths closely mirrored the social activities of young girls in rural communities:

’Molodezh’ vesnoiu zaniata veseleniami: pesniami, khorovodami, igrami, pliaskami, kachan’em na kachel’iakh, zabotitsia o svoikh nariadakh i ukrasheniakh, a takzhe prel’shchaet i uvelkaet vo svoi seti molodykh muzhchin’ (my emphasis).

Similarly, the author-narrator in *Kuny* seems interested in the *rusalka* myth only in so far as it reflects the anxieties of his young heroine. This is no surreal, fairy-tale fantasy. The pathos of the water-spirit, surely, lay in her sense of feeling imprisoned by an unhappy fate and powerless to effect change. In Romantic literature, the tragedy of the water-spirit lay in her inability to cross from one realm to another in order to achieve, or regain, her heart’s ambition, and her overriding emotion was thus one of yearning (*toska*). Mar’ka’s frustration and general sense of hopelessness arise as a result of her recognition that the true object of her desires, metaphorically speaking, belongs to another ‘realm’ (ie. the domain of the Church) and for this reason is
unobtainable. While Zamiatin emphasizes neither her beauty, nor her desire for revenge, her fierce passion is archetypal, and at the same time positively treated. In Mar'ka, he manages to encapsulate the paradoxical qualities of youthful femininity: innocence, sexual predatoriness and malevolence, balanced by sad premonitions of an unhappy fate, romantic longings and fierce desires. Unlike the 'evil' and dangerous rusalka, however, Mar'ka threatens no-one: her threat consists only of a challenge to sexual and religious convention.

Despite its deep roots in Russian folklore, Kuny is a quaint, modest, even conventional affair: it never truly articulates the darker and menacing Dionysian impulses with which, artistically, pre-Christian sexuality was imbued in the avant-garde arts. A particularly instructive comparison, since it was composed at broadly the same time, is the primitive ritual at the heart of Stravinskii and Diagilev's Rite of Spring. Set in the dark and distant past of the ancient Slavs, and involving a round-dance, a marriage by abduction, and a human sacrifice to the God of Spring and Light, Jarilo, the ballet and music were blatantly neo-primitivist in inspiration and design. It could not be said of Zamiatin, as it was of Nikolai Rerikh, the set and costume designer for the ballet, as well as Stravinskii's chief collaborator, that 'folklore, the link between mythology, geology and the seismic and cosmic forces of nature, always stirred his imagination.' The shocking and barbaric dissonances of Stravinskii's score are nowhere evident in Kuny. Even by comparison with Zamiatin's first, 'neo-primitive' collection of 1916, Kuny represents a considerable softening of view with regard to peasant Russia. One
does not have to agree entirely with Shane's definition of the story as a 'eulogy to Old Russia' in order to appreciate, despite its ending in a minor key, the Kustodievan sense of carnival which underlies the description of the fair. It is sufficient only to compare Kuny with the treatment of St. Elijah's Day in Uezdnoe, where the same motifs of heat, rain, thunder and impending punishment are all deployed, but without the same sense of exuberance and delight, to comprehend the degree to which Zamiatin's vision of provincial life had altered. This impression is reinforced when we come to examine Kriazhi, a tale also about spurned love, and one which exploits the lyrical beauty and harmony of nature as an ironic commentary on the refusal to recognise instinctive urges.

---

1See the editors' note on the opening page of Poludennitsa (IV, 23-45). All subsequent references, unless indicated, are to the version published in the Neimanis edition.
2Two further versions of Poludennitsa, both provisionally dated 1922, are available in IMLI - see IMLI, fond 47, opis' 1, ed. khr. 79 & 80. Unfortunately, since I have not been permitted access to these draft manuscripts, I have been unable to compare them with the manuscript published in the Neimanis edition.
3Kuny was first published in the journal Rossiia, 5, January 1923, pp. 1-3. All subsequent references, unless otherwise stated,
or within the body of the text of *Poludennitsa*, are to the 1923 version as published in the Neimanis edition (III, 77-83).

4 The use of the name 'Baryba', which occurs in the second introductory fragment of *Poludennitsa* (IV, 43), suggests that Zamiatin may even have conceived of the story earlier than 1914, i.e. at the same time as *Uezdnoe*. In my view, it is inconceivable that he would have used the same name twice in two different stories.


6 A. Gvozdev, writing in *Severnye zapiski*, June 1916, cited and translated in ibid., p. 117.

7 This was the view of A. Derman, writing in *Russkie vedemosti*, 155, 6 July 1916, cited and translated in ibid., p. 123.

8 See the introductory chapter to the present thesis, p. 31.

9 Three titles are mentioned: *Tlapka* - *lebedianskii razboinik*, *Prestupnyi monakh i ego sokrovishcha* and *Kucher Korolevy Ispanskoi* - see *Uezdnoe* (I, 60). In the sense that the first two anticipate the plot, giving Baryba the idea of stealing Evsei's savings, they introduce a metafictional element into the text.

10 Shane, op. cit., p. 171. He also maintains that the story takes place on Midsummer's Eve, which is also mistaken (this will be discussed in due course).

11 This would seem to be confirmed by the mention of a church in the two narratives, a feature which distinguished the market-town from the village. For indications of the relative size and amenities of both types of community, see Mary Matossian, 'The Peasant Way of Life', in Beatrice Farnsworth and Lynne Viola (eds.), *Russian Peasant Women*, New York, Oxford, 1992, pp. 11-40 [p. 13].

12 *Slovo predostavliaetsia tovarishchu Churyginu* (II, 84-93).

13 'Vsia priroda u nas tam rasplozhena v sploshnom lesu, tak chto vdali nikakogo bolee ili menee uezdnogo goroda, i zhizn' proishodit ochen' temnaia' (II, 84).


15 The term *kurnaia izba* (Zamiatin is presumably using the local expression, *kurnia*) refers to the primitive hut of the poor
peasantry in the nineteenth century. This hut was so-called because it did not have a chimney, thus causing the smoke and fumes from the stove to 'blacken' the interior. See Matossian, op. cit., p. 14.


17 In particular, it is interesting to speculate upon the possible influence of Remizov's Dokuka i balagur' e, a narrative consisting of individual sequences dedicated to specific female 'types', many of them modelled on folktales and motifs. See A. Remizov, Dokuka i balagur' e, St. Petersburg, 1914.

18 In his 1916 note to Vengerov (see Introduction, footnote 46), Zamiatin wrote that he had acquired various folktales and 'portents' from his grandmother: 'Uchilsia iazyku ia v Tambovskoi guvernii, v gorode Lebediani... a uchitel' nitsei byla vsego bol'she babyshka... priskazok... i prisukh vsiakikh znalа mnoghestvo.' Cited in Primochkina, op. cit., p. 149. His grandmother is also mentioned in his first autobiographical article: 'Chudesnye russkie slova znalа moia babka, mozhet byt' koe-chemu nauchilsia ot nee.' See A: 1923, op. cit., p. 175.

19 See, for example: 'a tut, v kukhne, teplyn' (23).

20 'Rebiatishky nalezut i d' iachkovy, i Aver' iana labaznika, i soldatki Praskov' i, i eshe nivest' ch' i- (....)' (23).


22 'Kuritsa petukhom poet - ne k dobru: togda suevernye khoziaeva svertvaiut ei golovu i brossaiut chrez porog, prigovarivaia: "na svoiu golovu, ne poi kuritsa petukhom." Otsiuda dazhe voznikla poslovitsa: ne poi kuritsa petukhom, ne branis' baba s muzhikom '. See Zabylin, op. cit., p. 268. Emphases in the original.

23 The definition of the word znakhар', and thus the identification of such a person in a given rural community, is fraught with difficulties. Dal' (I, p. 689) gives the following:
'znatok (....) lekar', samouchka (....) vorozheia, koldun, volkhv, zagovorshchik, sheptun'ia, kto portit i pravit liudei.' I have also been guided by Maksimov's Nechistaia, nevedomaia sila, first printed in 1903, reprinted edition, Moscow, 1993, pp. 173-85; and Ivanits, "'Spoiling' and Healing', in her Russian Folk Belief, op. cit., pp. 103-24.

24 Korámore (karamora) refers to a particular species of mosquito popularly known in Russia as a dolgonozhka. Although this sounds like the English 'daddy-long-legs', it is in fact harmful and malarial. See Slovar' russkago iazyka, Imperatorskaia Akademiia nauk, volume four, St. Petersburg, 1913, col. 2044.

25 Maksimov says that Russian faith healers prided themselves on their knowledge of botany, some claiming to know as many as ninety different grasses, herbs and roots. Twelve of these were compulsorily kept at home by every self-respecting practitioner: tsikuta, or odolim, semena, beleny, koren' lapchatki, bogoroditskaia trava, volch'iagody, koren' morkovnika, koren' paporotnika, kurich'a slepota, pautinnik, zelianye orekhi, kunavka, buzinnyi tsvet. See Maksimov, Nechistaia sila, op. cit., p. 110. Zamiatin's selection is eclectic. According to Dal' (II, p. 221), the kupyrnyi is similar to the 'carrot grass' root (koren' morkovnika), and therefore belongs to Maksimov's list. The alateinyi koren' most probably derives from the 'altei' plant (Althea officinalis), which belongs to the same family as the English 'dog-rose' (sobach' iaroza) - see Dal' (I, p.12).

26 For the Russian peasant, fear of "spoiling", the damage inflicted by malevolent sorcerers and witches, was ever-present. Just as he sensed that the atmosphere he breathed was saturated with invisible spirits, both good and evil, so too the peasant felt he was surrounded by persons who had special linkages with the unseen world and might be responsible for the failures and sorrows in his life.' See Ivanits, op. cit., p. 103.

27 Rendering assistance in gaining the affection of a loved one or causing someone to fall out of love was one of the major functions of the various practitioners of magic in the Russian village.' See ibid., p. 113. Maksimov is also illuminating on this point: 'Mimo vorozheini ne proidut ni udalye molodtsy, ni krasnje devitsy, ni
обманутые мужья, нервные жены, потому что и нынче, как в старину, живет в людях вера в "присуху". Не надо ни лисий гор, ни прородоровничих растаний, достаточно и деревенских заваленок, чтобы, узнавая скрытые тайны, усердно заниматься приворотами и отворотами любящих и охладевших сердец." See Maksimov, *Nechistaia sila*, op. cit., p. 142.

28'Oni (znakharki - PC) окхонно берутся "снимать" тоску с того человека, который лишился любви, но заставить полюбить не могут, так как "присуха" - дело греховное и делается тоже кольдунами. В этом собственно и заключается существенная разница между кольдунами и знахарами: то, что наколдуют чародей, - знахари и знахарки снимают и поправляют." See ibid., p. 183.

29'nапустить на кого болезнь, порчу, наводить знаменством, заговором' - see Dal', II, p. 457 (emphasis in the original). Zamiatin was well aware of the dangers malaria posed in southern Russian, since his own father was struck down for several days in 1909 by a 'fever' (*likhoradka*), although Zamiatin's mother was not sure whether it was malarial. See Mariia Zamiatina's letter to Zamiatin dated 25 April (Old Style) 1909, in 'Evgenii Zamiatin: "Krazrusheniui ravnovesiia..."', op. cit., p. 116.

30It is instructive to compare this passage with the spoiling scene in *Uezdnoe*. Ivanikha initially asks the two monks whether they have come for a 'love charm' (*prisukha* [I, 64]). She uses a bowl of water in order to enact her spell (*zagovor* [I, 65]), and having drunk some tea with this water in it, Baryba, the intended victim, is soon afflicted with a 'fever' (*likhomanka* [I, 65]).

31Ivanits discusses this phenomenon in *Russian Folk Belief*, op. cit., pp. 3-18. Interestingly, she quotes a correspondent from Tambov Province, V. Bondarenko, who wrote in 1890 that 'under the cover of Christianity, still understood only in its external form, many remnants of paganism have been retained'. See ibid., p. 3.

32*suzhenyi* in Russian means 'intended', or 'person chosen by fate'.
Marinka's grandmother dies on the Sunday before the first week of the Lenten Fast (*proshchaly novosvetskoe*), while Father Viktor's wife dies during *krestopoklonnaia nedelia*, i.e. the fourth week of Lent. See *Polnyi pravoslavnyi slovar'*, cols. 1493 & 1932 respectively. *Panikhidy*, which were special funeral services in memory of the dead, were held on the second, third and fourth Saturdays of Lent, whereas *roditel'skaia sobota*, mentioned in the story as the time to honour dead parents, can only refer here to the Saturday of Trinity Week. See ibid., cols. 1756 and 1958 respectively. According to my calculations, therefore, the fragment which begins with Marinka thinking aloud to herself about the death of her grandmother (24) can only occur nine days after the fourth Saturday of Lent, known in Russia as Catkin Week (*verbnaia nedelia*), during which time it was customary to observe the arrival of birds back from their emigration and the first stirrings of spring: '(....) otmechaetsia, chto s etogo dnia nachinaetsia prilet ptits, ptitsy gnezda zavivaiut, i voobshche, probuzhdaetsia zhivotnaia zhizn'. See A. Ermolev, *Narodniaia sel'skokhoziaistvennaia mudrost' v poslovitsakh, pogovorkakh i primetakh. I. Vsenarodnyi mesiatceslov*, St. Petersburg, 1901, p. 110.

'A na Rusal' noj nedele - nachnut uzhe i kuny vodit'....' (24). The round-dance season began in some areas as early as Easter; for others only on *Krasnaia gorka* (the first Sunday after Easter); and for others still during the week leading up to *Troitsyn den'*. See M. Gromyko, *Traditsionnye normy povedeniia i formy obshcheniia russkikh krest'ian XIX v.*, Moscow, 1986, p. 168. The exact nature of these *kuny* will be discussed in due course.

A *kurich'iibog* (28), more commonly known as a *kurinnyi bog*, is a smooth, round fieldstone with a small unperforated hole in the middle used by superstitious peasants to ward off evil spirits from the hen-house. See Ivanits, op. cit., p. 57. Zamiatin's description is interesting from the ethnographic point of view because it extends the parameters of this stone's powers quite considerably. Marinka believes that they drive mice away from larders; that they can be washed and added to water in a cow-

---

96
trough to increase the richness and quantity of the milk yield; and that they increase the egg-yield when hung above the chicken-hoop. All in all, it functions here as a fertility charm.

Witches were supposedly distinguishable from ordinary folk primarily by their 'tails', but any other form of (concealed) deformity was usually regarded with suspicion - see Ivanits, op. cit, p. 86. Zamiatin's use of the word kila, which refers to a disease-hardened swelling afflicting both animals and vegetables, may derive from the folk expression, nasazhivat' kilu, which described the process by which sorcerers cause healthy people suddenly to be struck down by illness or madness. See Maksimov, Nechistaia sila, op. cit., p. 127. It is also worth noting Dal's observation: 'Kilu, po obshchemu pover'iu naroda, priveshivaiut znakhari' (emphasis in the original). See Dal', II, p. 108.

'Chut' ne udarila starukhu, da poboialas' (29). It was commonly believed that a sorcerer could 'spoil' simply by striking or pinching his intended victim - see Maksimov, Nechistaia sila, op. cit., p. 179.

Sriashcha, or sriashch, is an obscure word which Dal' speculates may be of ecclesiastical origin. He suggests 'meeting', from the word sretenie, as well as 'pestilence', 'portent' and 'omen'. He also quotes a line from an unidentified psalm, or spiritual song - 'Ot sriashcha i besa poludennogo' - which may have been Zamiatin's source. See Dal', IV, p. 306.

See Zabylin, op. cit., p. 213. Fevers were so common that Russian peasants divided them into different types, each one associated with a particular female spirit. See D. Zelenin, Ocherki russkoi mifologii. Tom pervyi: umershie neestestvennoiu smert'i i rusalki, Petrograd, 1916, p. 212.

The word poludennitsa is probably a corruption of poludnitsa - in other words, the 'midday spirit', about which Ivanits observes: 'The few sources that mention the spirit give varying portrayals: she is envisioned as a tall, beautiful girl in white, as a widow in mourning, and, in Siberia, as an old woman in rags. In former times, evidently, this spirit was believed to walk about the fields at noon when the grain was ripe'. See Ivanits, op. cit., p. 74. Zelenin gives the term as an alternative for the water-spirit,
or *rusalka*. He notes that in the Borzensk district, Chernigov province, villagers divided the water-nymph into three distinct types - *utrennie*, *poludennitsy* and *vechernitsy* - depending on the time of day when they were believed to be dangerous; he also refers to reports in the Tambov area that *rusalki* were considered most dangerous in the morning and at midday. See Zelenin, op. cit., p. 167.

41"V polden' - ni spat', ni kufat'sia na reke nel'zia: bes-to poludennyi vot on - kak raz i prikhvatit. A spat', konechno, khochetsia, nechisty blaznit, zevotu nagoniaet.' See *Uezdnoe* (I, 41)

42According to Russian folklore, *rusalki* were rumoured to be afraid of the sign of the cross. See Zelenin, op. cit., p. 191.

43For *Poludennitsa* as a typical example of the Gogolian 'obsession text', see J. Graffy, 'Zamyatin's "Friendship" with Gogol', *Scottish Slavonic Review*, 14, 1990, pp. 139-80 [pp. 148-49].

44'Da okazyvается, gul vserossiiskii gromyhaet i tut, da s takim posvistom, chto ushi v trubku svorachivaet.' See Zamiatin's letter to Remizov dated 11-16 September (Old Style) 1918, in 'Pis'ma E. I. Zamiatina A. M. Remizovu', op. cit., p. 178. Maksim Gor'kii's intervention on behalf of Zamiatin's mother, which took the form of a telegram dated 25 March 1919 to the Union of Worker and Peasant Deputies in Lebedian', is cited and discussed in Primochkina, op. cit., p. 150.

45'Da chto: vot i Tikhvinskaia proshla, i Petra i Pavla, i Prepoloven' -e - pustuet kunnyi vygon za Kuimanskim ozerom. Tol'ko i ostalsia, chto Il' in den' (32). Tikhvinskaia, the festival to celebrate the Novgorod Icon of the Virgin Mary, takes place on 26 June; St. Peter and Paul's Day occurs on 29 June; and Prepoloven' -e is a mobile festival which takes place half-way between Easter and Ascension day. This would seem to suggest that *Poludennitsa* was written at least prior to *Afrika*, where the festival is dated properly - see chapter three of the present dissertation.

46'Tseluet Mar'ka kholodnuiu med' kresta, potom - ruku. I takie u nei guby - zhadyne, sukhie, raskrytye, kak treshchina v bezdorozhnoi zemle. Ruka otderivaetsia, s derzkoi nadezhdoi
Mar'ka podnimает глаза вверх. Но там всё то же на белом
плате Nerukotvornyi Lik' (78).

47 The religious and folk symbolism of St. Elijah's Day will be
analysed in due course. For the meaning of 'altar-day', Dal' gives
the following: 'prestol'nyi, ili prestol, den' pamiati sobytia ili
sviatogo, vo imia koego khram sooruzhen' (emphasis in the
original). See Dal', III, p. 381.

48 Ibid., I, p. 81.
50 Ibid., II, p. 146.
51 Ibid., IV, p. 20.

From the southern word, gom - see ibid., I, p. 373.

53 Ibid., II, p. 218.
55 Ibid., p. 118. See also the entry in Dal' (II, p. 218): 'kuna ili
kun'ia mordka, star: denezhnyi znak, kogda bel'i, kun' i, sobol'i
mekha zameniali den' gi' (emphasis in the original).

56 kunitsu, lisitsu, zolotuiu grivnu da stakan vina prosiat za
vykup nevesty.' Emphasis in the original. See ibid.
57 See Zabylin, op. cit., p. 118; and also Dal' (II, p. 218): 'Kuna,
kunnoe, kunichnoe star, okup za nevestu vladel'tsu, podat' s
novozhenov; vyvodnoe, plata za nevestu, vykhodivshiu v
chuzhuiu votchinu (...); Kunshchik, sborshchik podatei.' Emphasis
in the original.

58 One further nuance exists for the word kuna: Dal' (ibid.) gives
okovy and zheleznaia tsep' as alternatives for this word;
moreover, Zabylin cites a Lithuanian practice of placing the bride
in chains for the religious part of the wedding ceremony as a
symbolic punishment for the violation of her chastity. See the
footnote in Zabylin, op. cit., p. 118.
59 The term khorovod refers theoretically to any pastime outside
work hours which involves a collective, circular action, or any
other dance configuration during which songs are sung - these
may take place on village streets, in fields and meadows, or
under the open sky. In the stricter sense, however, the word
refers to a number of specific dance routines of varied
composition - mixed, female-only, etc. - which involve
Stsenicheskie deistviia i.e. dramatic scenes. For a detailed discussion of this phenomenon as an important part of the social calendar in rural areas during the nineteenth century, see Gromyko, op. cit., pp. 160-61.

60(...) uzh pozdno, otoshlo ikh vremia, proshla Rusaloch`ia nedelia, ne uspeli zaluchit´ sebe parnia, devushkami ostanutsia eshche na tselyi god. Odna nadezhda na II`inskie kuny: (...)’ (77).

61’Skhvatilis` krepkim krugom - krepkim chastokolom oboronilis` ot zhelannykh vragov, ot pogubitelei milykh’ (79).

62‘Voobshche, vybor nevesty ili zhenikha, liubov´ i ukhazhivanie, a takzhe razlichnye podrobnosti semeinoi zhizni, sostavliali liubimoe soderzhanie narodnoi zabavy i, v chastnosti - khorovodnykh igr i pesen.’ See V. Kallasha and N. Efros (eds.), Istoriia russkogo teatra, Moscow, 1914, p. 8.


64Propp divides popular songs about love and family life into two main categories: the golosovye, or progolosnye, which are sung with the voice only while working in the fields, at home, on boats etc.; and the songs accompanied by movements of the body and sung during round-dances, games or ordinary dances, known as `khorovodnye, igrovye, pliasovye pesni’. See Propp, Narodnye liricheskie pesni, Leningrad, 1961, pp. 14-17.

65‘V igre zhe khorovod chasto nazyvaetsia <gorodom>. Odin iz igraiushchikh stoit vnatri ili vne goroda i dolzhen naiti vorota ili slomat´ stenu, to est´ prorvat´ sia. Forma igry inogda ustanavlivaetsia iz samoi pesni (....)’. See ibid., p. 17.

66The song was originally recorded by Balakirev in Spasskii county, Tambov province - see M. Balakirev, Russkie narodnye pesni. Dlia odnogo golosa s soprovozdheniem fortep`iano, first published in 1866, reprinted edition, Moscow, 1957. Contrary to the title, this is a dance song which involves a young girl, the 'princess', standing in the middle of the circle, while a young man, her 'prince', walks around the outside in the opposite direction to its movement. At the words: 'ty vzoidi, sudar´, vo gorod', the young man breaks into the circle, stands opposite the Princess, makes a bow, and then kisses her. Balakirev gives the text of the opening lines as follows: 'Kak vo gorode tsarevna, tsarevna, Kak
vo gorode molodaia, molodaia,/Seredi krugi stoiala, stoiala,
Dorogim kortsom brenchala, brenchala/Zolotym perstnem siiala,
siiala./Kak vo gorode tsarev syn, tsarev syn,/Kak za gorodom
guliaet, guliaet./Prorubi, sudar’, voroty, voroty,/Prorubi, sudar’,
drugie, drugie/Prorubi, sudar’, i tret’i, i tret’i/Ty vzoidi, sudar’,
vo gorod, vo gorod,/Podoidi, sudar’ k tsarevne,
tsarevne/Poklonis’ sudar’, tsarevne, tsarevne, tsarevne (...). See Propp, op.
cit., pp. 190 & 543.

67A. I. Sobolevskii, Velikorusskie narodnye pesni, seven
volumes, St. Petersburg, 1895-1902, vol. 6, nos. 490-509 & 533-60. Balakirev’s song (see previous footnote) is published here as
no. 541.

68The zolotaia kazna (79) echoes the sense of *kuna* as an item of
currency, as well as referring to the desirability of a wealthy
husband. Moreover, the verb *voevat’* and the noun *vorog* (in
modern Russian - *vrag*) were standard metaphors in songs
referring to the pre-nuptial 'viewing' (*osmotr*) of young brides. See ibid., vol. 6, no. 578.

69Zamiatin planned to use the same betrothal game for his stage
adaptation of Leskov’s *Levsha* in 1924, but changed his mind in
favour of a 'peep-show' scene involving the *khaldei*. His
proposed draft, sent to the director, A. Dikii, on 3 February 1924,
contains the following exposition for scene one of Act Two: 'Tula.
Khorovodnaia igra o tsareve syne i tsarevne. Tsarev syn - Levsha,
tsarevna - tuk skaia devka Mashka. Velichaiut ikh, Levsha tseluet
Mashku. Tul’ skii kupets, konechno, eto vidit: on otdaet Mashku za
Levshu tol’ko, esli tot predostavit chervontsev na sto rublei, da
serebra na trid tsar, da assignatiami - pud i tri cheverti.' See A.
Dikii, 'Perepiska s E. I. Zamiadnim i B. M. Kustodievym po povodu
spektaklia "Blokha'', in A. Dikii. Stat’i. Perepiska. Vospominaniiia,

70The classical *khorovod* was essentially the preserve of young,
unmarried girls. Like the winter *posidelki*, the circle dances
allowed young people to mix socially. The girls were very much
on show, and there were many keen-eyed mothers with sons of
marriageable age observing and commenting among the on-


72 The festive season started at various times of the year depending on the community, but it was usually at some point following Easter. It continued until St. Peter's Day (29 June), after which time the amount of heavy toil required for the harvest made such 'frivolous' activities impossible. The only occasions on which such dances would be permitted after this date were 'altar-days' - see Gromyko, op. cit., 168.

73 This sense of urgency is reinforced by the mention of the 'old maids' (devushki-vekovushki), i.e. those whose fate is to remain unmarried: 'Im svoi polozhen udel - vechnym devushkam' (79). Earlier, it has been suggested by the image of the ripe apples in the priest's orchard: 'labloki v sadakh stali temnozheltymi i kachaiutsia, kazhdyi mig gotovye otdat' komu-to svoiu sladost'.'(77).

74 The disdain with which Russian peasants treated men and particularly women who for one reason or another did not wed carried very strong messages for youth (....). In a variety of pejorative names and proverbs Russian peasants blamed spinsters for their own circumstances, accusing them of failing to accept their social and economic responsibilities as wives and mothers: "soured bride", "homebody", "vekovushka" (an age-old girl) and "one-braided one" (odnokosaia - a spinster had to wear the single braid of a maiden as opposed to the two worn by married women) were mild slurs compared to "privateers", "wolfish woman" and "hypocrites".' See Worobec, op. cit., p. 124.

75 See the copper engraving entitled 'Russkaia pesnia', dating from 1871, which depicts two round-dances, one in the foreground and one in the background - reproduced in A. Sytova, *The Lubok. Russian Folk Pictures. 17th to 19th Century*, Leningrad, 1984, illustration no. 166. Compare also the word-pictures of Kuny with Boris Kustodiev's *Khorovod*, which dates

76' The mood at the mixed *khorovody* was more jovial. Here songs sometimes overstepped the normal social barriers prohibiting open discussion of sexual matters. They touched upon the purely sexual aspect of love and first sexual encounters (...). In such fashion did communities sanction and guide young couples in preparation for the ideal of romantic love and intimate relations within their future marital unions'. See Worobec, op. cit., p.130.

77* Lovets chelovekov* (I, 347).

78'Molenie ob urozhae, razlichnye zaklinatel’nye deistviia, obrashchenie k silam prirody i k dukham dobra i zla, povsemestno rasseiannym v prirode, proizvodilis’ tozhe povsemestno (....). Takovy khorovody, igry, pliaski, rezko osuzhdaemye tserkov’iu.' See B. Rybakov, *Iazychestvo drevnej Rusi*, Moscow, 1987, p. 120. Propp also notes that the standard *khorovod* moves 'sunwise' (*posolon’*). See Propp, op. cit., p.14.

79' Ekh, bystree, devki, ekh, zharche: vorogi blizko'; 'Veseloi zharkoi zloboi...'; 'Vse bystree kruzhitsia solntse...'; and '....kruzhitsia golova'. All citations are taken from page 80 of the text.


Ekh, poteshit’ sia khot’ nad etim, zam uchit’, zashchekotat’ porusaloch’ i - vse ravno, kto ni popadis’ po doroge...’ (80).

81' Bystro podnimaetsia vysokaia grud’ u tsarevny, i pod tonkoi krasnoi koftoi - dva ostrykh zhala - sprava i sleva.

Opushcheny veki, no vidit, kakoe vino u lashi v glazakh’ (80).

82'Sexual taboos were still fairly strong in rural Russia at the turn of the century. The degree of sexual intimacy permitted during dances was restricted, although 'kissing games' were not unknown during the winter *posidelki* and 'bundling' was apparently acceptable if certain conditions pertained. See Worobec, op. cit., pp.137-39.

83'V nashei sel’skoi zhizni II’ in den’ igraet ochen’ vazhniui rolo’, s nim sviazano mnogo poslovits, pogovorok, primet, a takzhe i
sueverii, i s nego zamechait povorot prirody na osen’, khotia leto so svoimi zharami esliche dolgo prostoit. Prazdnik etot chisto russkii i nigde v zapadnykh gosudarstvakh ego ne otmechal, ne sviazyvaia s nim, skol’ko mne izvestno, nikakikh primet i predskazani. See Ermolev, op. cit., pp. 379-84 [p. 379-80].
84 See Maksimov, Krestnaia sila, op. cit., p. 480.
85 ‘Sam po sebe II’ in den’ bol’ sheiu chast’ iu byvaet dozhdvivym i groznym, vsledstvie chego i II’ ia Prorok schitaetsia groznym, povelevaiushchim dozhdiami i gromom; no on vaste s tem daet liudiam i khleb, zhatvu zazhinaet, kopnu v pol stavit - karaia tekh, kto ne po pravde zhivet’. See Ermolev, op. cit., p. 380.
86 ‘Da net ni kapli. Khot’ by odna na smekh, odna kakai-a-nibud’ dozhdinka’ (81); and ‘Da, vse poshlo ne po-chelovech’ i - gde zhe vidano, chtoby II’ in den’ bez dozhdia’ (81).
87 ‘Tsleuet Mar’ ka kholodniuiu med’ kresta, potom - ruku. I takie u nei guby - zhadnye, sukhie, raskrytye, kak treshchina v bezdorozhnoi zemle’ (78).
88 ‘Sama ty, ekh! Razvytnaia bol’ no! Pliasavitsa. Iz-za vas etakikh II’ ia i dozhdia ne daet’ (81).
89 It is not clear why Zamiatin and his wife did not have children; it is alleged, however, to have caused them both some anguish: ‘Zamiatin umel byt’ veselym, chashche vsego vne svoego doma, gde byla, kak mne v molodosti kazalos’, kakaia-to chut’ unylaia predannost’ ego podrugi, slovno chuvstviushheia sebia vinovatoi iz-za ne dannogo emu rebenka, ili budto nesushchestvuiushchaia detskaia mogilka razdeliala ikh (.....).’ See the memoirs of I. Kunina, ’Vstrecha s Blokom’, Literatumoe obozrenie, 1991, 9, pp. 92-97 [p. 96].
90 Conventionally speaking, the phrase zateiat’ spor means ’to pick an argument’, whereas zateiat’ igry means ’to organise games’, such as those played in rural communities at Christmas time or during the summer. Dal’ gives zadornitsa, along with zadirshchik and zadirshchitsa as ’someone who picks fights and starts arguments’, from the verb zadirat’, although it could be connected with zador, meaning ’ardency’, ’animation’. See Dal’, I, p. 573.
The term *zapevala* refers to the soloist who launches the singing and whose tune is picked up by the folk 'choir'. See *Slovar’ russkogo iazyka*, Akademiia nauk SSSR, second edition, four volumes, 1981-84, vol. 1, p. 555.

An early example of this type is the heroine of Karamzin's *Bednaia Liza*.


Particularly useful in this context are Ivanits' discussion of the *rusalka* folk myth in *Russian Folk Belief*, op. cit., pp. 75-81; and E. Pomerantseva, *Mifologicheskie personazhi v russkom fol’klore*, Moscow, 1975, pp. 68-91.

Most accounts of the *rusalka* paint a picture of sisterhoods of lovely maidens in league with the unclean force. This is the standard image for Southern Great Russia and for the Ukraine, and it is an image highly evocative in its interweaving of beauty and treachery.' See ibid., p. 76.

Compare the celebrated *rusalka* passage in Gogol’s *Strashnaia mest* (1832): 'usta chudno usmekhaiutsia, shcheki pylaiut, ochi vymanivaiut dushu.... ona sgorela by ot liubvi, ona zatselovala by.... Begi kreshchenyi chelovek! usta ta ee - led, postel’ - khолодnaia voda; ona zashchekochet tebia i utashchit v reku'. See *Strashnaia mest*, in N. Gogol’, *Sobranie sochinenii*, seven volumes, Moscow, 1976-79, vol. 1, 1976, pp. 54-80, especially pp. 74-76.
Rite of Spring (Vesna sviaschennaiia) was composed by Stravinskii between 1911 and 1913, and first performed as a ballet on 29 May 1913 in Paris. It is unlikely that Zamiatin had seen it performed at the time of writing, although there was a concert performance under the baton of Sergei Kusevitskii in Moscow in February 1914. See Eric Walker White, Stravinsky. The Composer and His Works, London, 1966, p. 207.

Rerikh was an acknowledged expert on the ancient Slavs, which was one of the reasons Stravinskii consulted him after he first glimpsed the possibilities of the music in a reverie. This quotation is from Konstantin Iuon, cited (and translated) in Walker, ibid., p. 208.

Kuiman' fair is the first rural iarmarka to be portrayed in Zamiatin's fiction, and one cannot help wondering whether he was influenced by Kustodiev, especially the two works, both entitled iarmarka, which were painted in 1906 and 1908. See V. Lebedeva, op. cit., illustration number 42; and Lebedeva, Boris Mikhailovich Kustodiev, Moscow, 1966, illustration no. 117.
CHAPTER TWO

(Kostroma)

*Kriazhi*

When Comrade Churygin describes his native Kuiman' as a place buried amid deep forest, miles from any provincial town, one in which life is 'dark and ignorant', he might equally well be talking about the village depicted in *Kriazhi*.¹ The opening lines, which picture a forest so dense that a person can walk for an entire day without meeting another soul, establish the themes of isolation and marginality with an explicitness rare in Zamiatin's prose; and for the first time in his fiction this entity is given a sobriquet, *Rus'*, with all its connotations of primordial solidity, strength and durability. Symbolically, the murmuring pine trees that stand as yet untouched by the ravages of modern civilisation belong to the same solid and primeval forest which serves as the central metaphor for Old Russia in Zamiatin's ambiguous lament for the pre-revolutionary era, the aptly-titled *Rus'*(1923).² They are 'wise' (*mudrye*) and 'grand' (*vazhnye*), and stand as guardians of ancient wisdoms and protectors of religious propriety until later metamorphosed by the winter snow into 'old nuns in white cowls praying silently for the living'.³ *Kriazhi*, then, is a narrative which begins by advertising itself openly as part of a certain cultural 'space', one which is located in the provincial heartlands of the Russian imagination and in which the ancient conventions and traditions of conservative rural society have been preserved.
intact. It is against this background of age-old purity and permanence that the ensuing narrative demands to be interpreted.

Unlike Kuiman’, the village of Pozhoga seems not to exist on the map and probably owes its origin to the Russian verb for 'to destroy by fire' or 'to burn', which often provided the place-name designation in isolated areas where dense forest had been cleared or burned away for settlement. Nevertheless, in common with Poludennitsa and Kuny, the region which serves as the backdrop for Kriazhi is quite specifically indicated by the author-narrator. As we have already had occasion to note, three areas are mentioned in connection with 'folklore' in Zamiatin's House of Arts lectures - Tambov, Kostroma and the North - and it is significant that the river which features as an agent of death in the narrative - the Unzha - is named on several occasions. This river does exist, having its source in the very northernmost tip of the Kostroma region and from there winding southward for approximately two hundred kilometres, before joining the Volga near the town of Iur’evets, mid-way between modern-day Kineshma and Gorodets (see attached map). Interestingly, the lower section of this river south of Makar’ev is notable for the narrow ridges (kriazhi) which run parallel to the left bank all the way to its confluence with the Volga; in addition, a famous expanse of primitive forest lay both to the east and west of these ridges, occupying a thick swathe of territory between the Unzha and the Vetluga rivers all the way south to the bend of the Volga at Nizhnii Novgorod. By all accounts, this was indeed a sparsely-populated and isolated region. According to Brockhaus and Efron's
encyclopedia, it was so secluded that the inhabitants called these ridges 'mountains' because they had never seen real mountains before; furthermore, an ethnographic expedition to the northern section of this forest eight years after Kriazhi was first published recorded that it was a 'backward region (....) untouched by urban civilization and the elegant tradition of great Russian literature', a region in which belief in 'devilry' and 'sorcery', and stories about 'fire-breathing dragons' still remained powerfully entrenched among the local populace.

Zamiatin may well have travelled up the Unzha during his days as a student on ship-building assignments (the stretches of the river below the town of Makarev were accessible by ferry and paddle-steamer). Certainly, the ethnographic conceit of his story and the weaving of local dialect into the linguistic fabric of the text depend for their effectiveness on an impression of authenticity. Extra-textual sources report that the cutting down of trees and the logging of wood during the summer months was a major source of income for villages situated along the lower Unzha; thus, it is entirely in keeping with this reality that the two main protagonists in Kriazhi are shown earning a meagre living through wood - Ivan is in the process of clearing a copse owned by the local priest, while Maria is depicted in the opening chapter selling blocks of wood at the local market (265). More than this, however, the forest from which these people make their living functions simultaneously as an integrating metonym, its trees embodying the very qualities of the inhabitants themselves. The multiple layers of meaning contained within the title seek to highlight this with maximum poetic effect: kriazh
refers both to a narrow ridge of low mountains and a solid off-cut or block of wood, as well as a thick log or tree-stump; moreover, the adjective derived from this noun, *kriazhistyi*, meaning 'strong' (*krepkii*), 'hard' (*tverdyi*) and 'thick' (*tolstyi*) can be employed in a human context to denote qualities of hardiness, toughness and strength. As illustrated elsewhere in Zamiatin's provincial fiction - for example, the lugubrious lawyer Morgunov's assessment of Baryba in *Uezdnoe* and the description of the store owner Kortoma in *Sever* - the adjective can refer to an obstinate, implacable tendency, as well as indicating pure, physical strength. This is patently the sense implied when the author-narrator describes Ivan and Mariia as 'rigid' and 'conventional'. *Oba - kriazhi, norovistye: (.....)* (266), he notes, commenting on their stubborn refusal to act upon a powerful and apparently mutual attraction for each other. Like the ancient, sturdy trees with which they are surrounded, therefore, these two protagonists belong to a world which is deeply rooted in convention, strongly conservative and difficult to dislodge, one which has not yet come into contact with the modern world.

*Kriazhi* lends itself to a variety of readings depending on the particular critical focus. Opening as it does with an incident involving a stone idol, and playing rather deliberately with the notion of 'idolisation' in the sense of 'to love someone passionately, to bow down to someone, like a god', it is only natural that the story be read as statement on the primacy of passionate love versus convention - in the words of Alex Shane:
'The story "Kriazhi" expresses Zamjatin's opinion that neither pride nor convention should stand in the way of the realization of love. Through stubborn pride, the strong physical attraction between Ivan and Marjia remains unrealized.\textsuperscript{17}

This can be viewed through the critical prism of the Gogolian 'obsession-text', one in which the male protagonist becomes intoxicated with a female 'love object' and dies an unnecessary and unheroic death in striving hopelessly to attain it.\textsuperscript{18} In this context, it is worth noting the heavily emphasized rivalry between the two protagonists, one which gives rise to a sense of emasculation and frustration on the part of the male hero and leads ultimately to fantasies of domination through violence. We may well ponder the implications of a tale which seems to chart the suicidal tendencies of a young man denied his traditional role within a patriarchal community, and whose sense of adequacy is challenged by a strident and determined female; indeed, the author-narrator of Kriazhi invites the reader to interpret Mar'ia's stubborn resistance as something which appears to flout the laws of nature. It should be pointed out, however, that the very backwardness of the region makes the primitivism of Ivan's behaviour almost inevitable; moreover, the comic incident involving the nechist' at the beginning of the story, a pagan idol which 'infests' Ivan with sexually 'impure' fantasies, suggests that the narrator's attitude towards the ensuing events is ironic, to say the least.
One of the most striking aspects of this text, however, is the *lubok* or *skaz* stylization: it is the story's most essential, textural ingredient, and to ignore it would be doing an injustice to its overall aesthetic appeal. When Shane talks about 'convention', for example, it is important to identify the nature and role of convention within a particular community and the influence it might have on the protagonists' behaviour; likewise, the subtle poetic nuance of several episodes in this narrative, which are largely ironic and subversive in intent, can be missed without some grasp of folk-religious culture. Intrinsic to this aspect of the story is the implied narrator's imaginative viewpoint, i.e. his *skaz* 'mask', and the degree to which this effectively disguises the 'cultured' author concealed behind it. This problem has been raised in the introduction of the present thesis, and is also the subject of an interesting, albeit cursory, analysis within the wider context of oral narration in Russian literature during the first decades of the twentieth century. The authors in question take the view that while the highly poetic passages of *Kriazhi* tend to compromise the colloquial tendency of the narration, the use of folklore generally identifies the implied narrator closely with the imaginative world of the fictional characters. Zamiatin's provincial *rasskazchik* displays an easy familiarity with the symbolic resonance of Orthodox feast-days; he also exhibits an acute sensitivity to the passing of the seasons and the significance of even the most minor deviations in the pattern of the weather, an important litmus test for the authenticity of the peasant imagination. Yet at the same time there is a distancing effect in operation which can be witnessed not only in the relatively sophisticated artistic organisation of the text (the use of tropes,
symbolic juxtaposition, parallelism etc.), but also in the ironic
treatment of peasant superstition and 'double-faith'. In effect,
Zamiatin's narrator manages both to project and to subvert the
imaginative viewpoint of the folk, and it is the ambiguous tension
between these opposing tendencies which I propose to examine
in detail in this chapter.

Kriazhi concerns itself with two characters whose clash of
temperament prevents them from recognising a powerful, mutual
attraction until it is too late. Mar'ia, the female protagonist, is
sketched with characteristic brevity, and appears prominently in
only two colourful tableaux, emerging nevertheless with strongly
defined features. She is a powerful young woman, described
variously as a 'firebrand' (boi-devka [268]), 'prankster' (konovod
[267]), 'ringleader' (zavodilo [267]), 'dare-devil' (otorviazhnitsa
[268]), and 'powerfully athletic' (bogatyrikha [268]), all of which
emphasizes her physical prowess, her sense of initiative and
playfulness, and her lack of submissiveness. Her initial
encounter with Ivan reveals a hot-blooded temper, and she is
later witnessed tampering mischievously with the nets of the
local fishermen on St. Peter and Paul's Day (June 29) and catching
a sheatfish in the river with her bare hands (268) - an indication
of her fearlessness, presumably, since this is the largest fish in
European fresh waters and seems to have been generally
feared. Mar'ia plainly represents a challenge to male
expectations of dominance within an essentially patriarchal
society: she appears uninterested in men generally, living alone
with her mother (there is no mention of a father) and working
the farmstead on her own. It may well be convention which
causes her to spurn Ivan - the reason she gives to the village gossips is that he is poor and has no property of his own - yet there is also an element of injured pride, if not deliberate defiance. As far as Zamiatin's fiction generally is concerned, Mar'ia is the prototype for other powerfully erotic female characters, such as Pelka (Sever) and 1-330 (My [1920]), in all cases their breasts being the main focus of physical interest (Zamiatin's personal obsession with mammarys, noted sardonically by Remizov in his 1937 obituary, is very much in evidence here). Unlike these later heroines, however, it is primarily her failure to recognize and act upon her true feelings which leads to a self-inflicted disaster in the form of Ivan's unfortunate death.

For his part Ivan is unable to cope with this wild, untameable opponent. A poor, simple and apparently parentless muzhik, one who scrapes a living by chopping down trees on a piece of land owned by the village priest, he is initially attracted to Mar'ia physically: 'Ekh, khorosha devka (.....) kaby ne takaia byla, i svernul by Ivan, a tut....' (265). Moments later, when a button bursts off her white tunic to reveal her breasts as she raises her fist in anger, his attention is drawn to her erotic sensuality. After the clash of tempers which gives rise to his initial interest, he tries to engineer situations in which he can impress her through his physical prowess. The plot, however, contrives only a series of humiliating failures: his efforts to kill a snake plaguing the local community after St. Cosmas and Damian Day (November 1) are ruined when someone else in the village gets there before him; his reckless journey by horse and cart in the middle of a winter's
night - an open invitation to forest wolves to attack both him and the geese he is transporting back home for Christmas - passes unchallenged; finally, his attempt to impress Mar'ia by being the first to cross the river Unzha after its winter 'bridge' has formed leads to his death. Undeniably, Ivan's concept of the courtship ritual is primitive and based on traditional notions of male supremacy, an attitude which is perhaps only natural for someone of his background, temperament and intelligence; indeed, it is a challenge from the women on the other bank of the Unzha, questioning his masculinity and bravery, which provokes his foolhardy decision to cross the ice in the first place. His passion has its disturbing and violent moments, and it is a measure of his (sexual) frustration that he can hack down a tree with an axe and imagine that it is Mar'ia submitting to his indomitable will, gradually falling to her knees in obeisance like a tree trunk slowly crashing to the ground (269).

A reader accustomed to sophisticated fiction might find this all rather simple, banal even, which is not to say that the story is devoid of subtle, artistic touches. Shane has drawn attention to the lyrical expressiveness of certain passages in Kriazhi and analysed well Zamiatin's interest in the rhythmic and musical potential of language (a feature of his work which has been noted in connection with Uezdnoe and tends in any case to compromise the purity of his skaz). The narrator subtly links the three main episodes of the narrative together by means of visual motifs which revolve around images of nominally lifeless bodies wriggling vigorously back to life: the sheat-fish, which the men claim is 'sleepy', suddenly 'springs' back to life after it has been
dragged out of the water by Mar'ia and her companions;\(^{26}\) and the snake, which has been plaguing the local community, is still writhing after it has been captured and decapitated.\(^{27}\) These episodes ironically anticipate Mar'ia's desperate plea for Ivan to come back to life after he has been pulled out of the frozen water at the end of the story.\(^{28}\) There is a further symbolic foreshadowing of this death in an earlier passage which plays cleverly on the nuances of the Russian word \textit{dur'}, meaning both 'obstination' or 'idiocy' (in the sense of Ivan's unreciprocated preoccupation with Mar'ia), but also 'vodka' (the word is used in connection with St. Michael's Day [November 8], a great day in the peasant calendar for drunken celebrations). The passage in question refers to the common method of recovering from a hangover:

\begin{quote}
Morozu by teper' liutogo, tak chtob derev'ia treskalis'! Da vybezhat' by v odnoi rubakhe, \textit{okunut'sia} v moroz, \textit{kak v vodu studenuiu}, chtob prodernulo vsego, chtob nogami pritopnut' - zhivo by vsiu dur' iz golovy von.... (my emphases [270]).\(^{29}\)
\end{quote}

By the end of the tale, Ivan has indeed been 'submerged' in 'freezing water', the difference being that the regaining of his sanity this time round has been achieved only through death.\(^{30}\) Also noteworthy is the ghostly echo of the aforementioned 'creaking' of the trees in the severe cold (\textit{treskalis'}\(\text{'}\)) when the ice starts to 'crack' across the surface of the Unzha (\textit{krugami shel tresk} \[271]\)), both sounds harking back audibly to the initial 'croaking' (\textit{kriakan' e}) of the wooden axle as it strikes the pagan
idol (265). Lastly, if we treat the heat of the sun and the cold of the winter-freeze respectively as metaphors for Ivan and Mar’ia’s romantic attitude towards each other (passion versus supposed frigidity), it is supremely ironic that Ivan should die as a result of an unexpected and continuing thaw in the temperature.

This accepted, there is a pattern of folk imagery in the text which raises important questions about the narratorial point of view and gives the story a universal resonance. From the point of view of lubok stylization, for instance, Ivan and Mar’ia are presented as stock figures of the folk imagination, rather than individual personalities. Their Christian names, John and Mary, are extremely common in Russia, and suggest that they are typical and healthily attractive representatives of their respective genders. In several ways, moreover, the narrator stresses that it is natural for this couple to be paired off as a love-match. It is significant that on three occasions in the opening chapter their names are mentioned together in close proximity: 'Cherez etu samuiu nechist’ i poshla vrazhda mezhdu Ivanom da Mar’ei' (265); 'skoro provedali, kakaia poshla razderiaga mezhdu Ivanom da Mar’ei' (266); and 'I rasgaziatsia oni oba, Ivan da Mar’ia...' (266). It should be noted, in addition, that the phrase Ivan da Mar’ia, rather than the more usual Ivan i Mar’ia, is the sub-title of the first draft of Kriazhi as preserved in the IMLI archives. This emphasis on what appears to be a natural bond may well derive from Russian folklore. When juxtaposed in this fashion, both visually and audibly, the names of the young pair echo the name of a wild flower, the so-called ivan-da-mar’ia, which is
known in English as the 'cow-wheat flower' and distinguished by its yellow and blue petals. Elsewhere in Russian literature this flower features as a symbol of natural harmony, lyric beauty and essential Russianness.\(^{33}\) Equally as important, it was reputed to possess health-giving qualities: in the nineteenth century young girls picked the *ivan-da-mar'ia* flower prior to the festival of Ivan Kupala (St. John the Baptist's Day, June 24) and used it in steam-baths in preparation for the next day's courting rituals. According to Pavel Mel'nikov-Pecherskii, whose ethnographic novel *V lesakh* hailed from an area just south of the River Unzha, these flowers were believed to make the girls young and beautiful so that young men would fall in love with them.\(^{34}\) The absence of the hyphens when these two names appear together in *Kriazhi* - which would form the name of the flower proper if present in the text - graphically underlines the disruption of an unbreakable natural bond between the two protagonists.\(^{35}\) It is worth remarking also in this context that a similar conceit was attempted by Remizov in *Dokukai balagur'e*.\(^{36}\)

Zamiatin's narrator exploits motifs from folk songs in a similar manner. The names of John and Mary feature widely as the 'ideal pair' in the repertoire of love song; thus it comes as little surprise that the narrator awards the protagonists of his tale the physical characteristics of the typical love song hero and heroine: Mar'ia has eyebrows of sable-fur, a customary stock-in-trade of the folk lyric, and is described variously as a 'beauty' (*krasavitsa* [265]), as 'rose-cheeked' (*chervonnaia* [268]) and 'luxuriant' (*pyshnaia* [268]); for his part, Ivan is 'strong and athletic' (*bogatyр*, *statnyi* [266]), with blond, curly hair (*kudriavy* [266], *kudlami rusymi* [266]).
[269]), another trait favoured in the genre.37 Several of the love-song's standard motifs are echoed in Kriazhi - for example, the offering of a gift and the invitation of one's 'beloved' into the round-dance as a symbolic proposal of marriage (see Ivan's plan to give Mar'ia a comb on St. Peter and Paul's Day). As in Kuny, the expectation of marriage is the background against which the relationship takes place.38 Ivan, albeit half in jest, is singled out by the village gossip-mongers as a potential match for Mar'ia because of his strength and good looks;39 and it is a source of much amusement to these 'schemers' that the couple pretend not to be interested in each other. Even at the turn of the century, however, social convention dictated that romantic love was a secondary consideration when compared to the economic prospects which a bride would gain through acquiring a rich husband; thus Ivan, without a penny to his name ('bez kola-bez dvora' [266]), is simply not a serious proposition for Mar'ia.40

Having established this state of natural expectation on the part of the reader, the rest of the narrative gears itself towards extracting the maximum possible pathos from the young couple's situation. The central episodes, orchestrated around both a general shift in the cycle of the seasons and a number of Orthodox festivals, reinforce the unnaturalness of their unfulfilled match. This operates on two levels. As occasions for celebration in which the whole community was expected to participate, every mention of a feast-day serves only to emphasize the chasm which separates the two protagonists against a general background of collective celebration; furthermore, the themes of isolation and marginality with which the story opens begin to assume a more
ominous significance as Ivan finds himself more and more cut off from the rest of the village. Chapter one concludes by evoking the loneliness of sleeping at night on one's own: 'A noch' iu....Da chto: noch' iu chelovek ved' odin sam s soboi' (266); chapter two ends with Ivan watching from a distance as the young boys and girls of the village participate in a round-dance (268); and chapter three contrasts a collective mushroom-picking expedition by the village with Ivan's solitary work in the forest, followed later by his decision not to show his face in public for the rest of the winter (269). As we shall see, the actual festivals in question had important resonances in the folk imagination as far as courtship, match-making and marriage were concerned. This serves to increase Ivan's sense of desperation and explains indirectly why he is prepared to risk his life in a futile show of manliness at the very end of the story.

The first festival mentioned is St. Peter and Paul's Day (June 29), which the Russian people celebrated variously in the nineteenth century. As an ancient Orthodox feast-day to commemorate the apostles Peter and Paul, it was regarded as a festival with special relevance for fishermen - communities in which fishing played a vital economic role would thus lay out their nets and pray to the saints for a good catch. It was also the point in the year when the sun reached its zenith - hence the ancient custom among the common folk to treat the day as a 'sun festival'. There is a certain amount of evidence that it was considered a festival in which mothers and daughters were allowed a measure of freedom from the male head of the household's strict and protective gaze. More significantly, St. Peter and Paul's day
marked the end of the festive season and was thus the last opportunity to indulge in round-dance celebrations - unless, of course, there was an 'altar-day' (предстол'ный праздник) later in the year. Lastly, because it was nearly always one of the last major festivals of the summer season, it was traditional for the young to permit themselves a joke at the expense of the older village inhabitants.

As an ethnographic record, Zamiatin's description of this festival is very much a series of impressionistic snapshots. The opening words of chapter two - 'Петров день, великий праздник летний' (266) - imply that St. Peter and Paul's Day, rather than St. John the Baptist's Day, was the more significant summer festival in this area, no doubt because it was a fishing village. As the festival day approaches, the villagers are already engaging in outdoor celebrations (гуляние), the peasants are getting drunk on vodka (probably the green wine popular in rural areas), and the young boys and girls are taking part in round-dances, the korogody (266). On the day of the festival itself, the red-hot sun 'burns like a bonfire' (267). The local peasants lay their fishing nets across the river early in the morning and can be seen later dozing in the shade of the trees on Horse Island, presumably having returned to recover from their drinking bouts (267). The local girls go bathing in the mid-afternoon and decide to play a traditional trick on the fishermen by pulling in their nets (267). Maria, having fearlessly landed the sheat-fish, trades it for money and buys animal-shaped cakes (кошульи) and honey for the traditional gostintsy. Later in the evening, the round-dance takes place under the shadows of the pine-trees, watched by the
adults of the village. Traditional songs are sung - Zamiatin quotes two lines of a song which resembles one first recorded by Rimskii-Korsakov49 - and Mar'ia is chosen several times by the young men in the dance (268). Finally, as the sun sinks below the horizon and the moon slips out into the night sky, the older peasants disperse tipsily home.50

While it is interesting to compare these images with the general picture of St. Peter and Paul's Day celebrations observed by such ethnographers as Maksimov and Pavel Mel'nikov-Pecherskii, it is the artistic subversion of the festival's 'theme' which is most striking. Zamiatin's narrator plays deliberately with the notion of 'catching' as it reflects the fishermen's preoccupation on this feast-day and turns it into a general metaphor for the process of trapping, or acquiring, a bride. The action, for example, takes place on Horse Island, an island on which horses are 'tamed' every year (ponozh' loshadinaia [267]).51 As the burning heat of the sun intensifies early in the morning, Ivan is shown in a frenzy of activity, furiously polishing a copper comb which he plans to present Mar'ia - a gift which expresses not only his 'love' for her, but also his intention to ask her hand in marriage; this is implied by the statement: 'Est' otkuda vybrat' v Pozhoge: prigozhikh mnogo....' (267).52 Like the fishermen of the village, Ivan sets a metaphoric 'net' in the hope of 'catching' an important prize. Ironically, however, it is Mar'ia herself who makes the 'catch' and offers a 'gift' of her traded earnings to the boys and girls among her friends. The difficulty she experiences, first in removing the nets from their stake and then in hauling in the sheat-fish itself - 'tiani-tiani-tiani!' (267) - is the metaphorical
reverse image of Ivan's attempt to reel her in throughout the entire narrative. Moreover, it is another ironic anticipation of his eventual fate, since a very similar appeal is made by Mar'ia to bystanders when Ivan is fished out of the water half-alive at the end of the story: 'Kachai, rebiata, kachai!' (271). Another image of subjugation is suggested when the narrator describes Mar'ia having 'harnessed' the sheat-fish - 'kak Mar'ia soma obrotala' (my emphasis [268]) - a word used normally in connection with horses, and therefore echoing the use of the word ponozh' at the beginning of the chapter, but also having a sexual and marital connotation in peasant slang. Disgruntled that his prey has managed to escape, Ivan decides to absent himself from the dancing, the last 'courtship' opportunity of the season; moreover, his isolation is reinforced symbolically by his standing outside the circle and watching the ritual from a distance. His failure in general is stressed by mention of Mar'ia being 'chosen' by the other boys in the korogod - within the semiotics of the dance a reference not only to the other boys' desire to choose her as a partner, but symbolically to their desire to 'marry' her. After the setting of the sun, Ivan is symbolically 'pierced' by the 'horns' of the moon (an ironic echo of a popular marriage song in which a young lad's blond curls are equated with the bright eyes of the sun and the golden horns of the moon), and decides finally to throw his prized gift into the river.

The next festival is St. Cosmas and Damian's Day (1 November), indicated by the author-narrator by means of the popular expression: kuz'minki (269). The symbolic connotations of this holiday for the Christian Church and the common folk were at
slight variance. For the Orthodox Church, the first of November commemorated the martyrdom of the Eastern saints Cosmas and Damian, the twin brothers and blacksmiths who acquired a legendary reputation in their native Cyrrhus for practising medicine without charging fees and working miraculous cures. As the patron saints of physicians, they were regularly invoked by rural folk in Russia whenever they or their farmstock fell ill or suffered from disease. On the other hand, largely due to various incidents in the brothers' *Lives*, they were also regarded as protectors of the family hearth and the happiness of married couples. According to Maksimov, this was a day on which young girls were put in charge of the household and songs were sung which testified to its importance as a 'match-making' festival, one of several which accompanied the onset of winter in rural communities. The match-maker invoked in these songs was a fictitious personage named Madame Kuz'ma-Demian, patently the product of a felicitous pun on the verb 'to forge', as in 'to forge a marriage' (*kut'svad'bu*) and 'to forge metal' (*kut'zhelezu*), the standard activity of a blacksmith.

In *Kriazhi*, as we have already noted, the reference to this feast day is direct: 'S kuz'minok - bab'ego, devich'ego da kurich'ego prazdnika - dozh'd poshel...' (269). In this way the author-narrator demonstrates his awareness of its significance for wives and young women. Similarly, the themes of sickness and health are also bought into play and manipulated by the author-narrator for ironic effect. Just prior to the mention of this festival, at the beginning of the third chapter, the narrator mentions the local priest's legendary powers of curing ailments with herbal
medicines, one of these ailments being 'carnal desire' (bludnaia strast' [269]). This is a comic touch, since the church authorities would have taken a dim view of such 'healing'; nevertheless, it is followed by the insinuation that Ivan himself is suffering from precisely such an 'illness': the image of him felling a pine tree, imagining that it is Maria submitting to his wishes, is an image of violent subjugation symptomatic of a serious and disturbing sexual 'sickness'. Ironically, however, the priest no longer remembers the recipes for his cures. This introduction to the theme of the festival is succeeded in turn by the tale of a young boy poisoned by a snake after a mushroom expedition to the local forest: he dies, an anticipation of Ivan's fate and an ironic commentary on a community that believes in miracle cures. At this point, the courtship theme is reintroduced. The snake which poisons the boy is transformed (presumably by rumour) into a 'terrifying serpent' (zmei strashnyi [269]), and Ivan sees this as another occasion upon which to impress Maria: '(... Nikomu drugomu - Ivanu nado zmeia ubit', i toga....' (269). Doubtless he is influenced by recollections of the ancient heroic ballads which frequently depicted serpents, dragons as 'abductors' of young brides (see, for example, the exploits of the Russian bogatyri, Dobrynia Nikitich). Unfortunately, this particular dragon is 'slain' by someone else and he returns to find the snake curled up in a circle. From this moment onwards, out of anger and frustration, Ivan stops going out to the priest's plot of land and withdraws generally from the community, an act tantamount to social death.
These two episodes demonstrate the narrator's willingness to subvert the traditional associations of the popular imagination with certain religious festivals; and he continues his strategy during a third sequence which, technically, should exist as a separate chapter in its own right. The words 'Zabeieli utrenniki, zaziabl zemlia (...) (269) usher in a new 'episode' in the story which is also orchestrated around a series of festivals and predicated on the notion of expectation reversal, but in this case owing to an exceptional fluctuation in the weather which leads to the abnormal delay of the winter freeze. As noted by Chicherov, it was characteristic of the peasant to try to predict the harshness of the forthcoming winter, and it is an indication of the author-narrator's closeness to the earth and his familiarity with the relevant portents (primety) that he should allude in this passage to a series of popular sayings from which weather lore was derived. The dramatic intention, evidently, is to alert the reader to the occurrence of an unnatural phenomenon. Rainfall on St. Cosmas and Damian's Day (269), for example, was regarded as extremely unusual, especially since this was the day when the general populace (especially in the North) expected the beginnings of the winter - in the words of one popular saying: 'Kuz'ma-Dem'ian kuet na vsiu zimu.' St. Michael's Day (November 8), also mentioned in the story (269), was another occasion on which the peasants searched for an indication of future weather patterns: while it was usually expected to be mild, tradition suggested that it should reverse the expectation already established on St. Cosmas and Damian's Day. In Kriazhi, however, this does not happen: the snow arrives and the earth frosts slightly (270). At this point, the narrator expresses surprise
at the continuing absence of a severe winter freeze and the
general thaw in temperature, as a result of which, by the time of
sviatki (December 6 onwards), there is still no 'path' across the
Unzha river (270).\textsuperscript{67} This is an 'unheard of event' (nebyvaloe delo
[270]) and reflects the general preoccupation with the arrival of
the winter frost during the festivals of St. George (26 November),
St. Sahbas (5 December) and St. Nicholas (6 December). It is
interesting that the winter path across the Unzha is still only two
days old by the time Ivan tries to cross it at some unspecified
point after St. Nicholas' Day, and is still not firm enough to cross
safely. The reader is left in little doubt that there is something
profoundly odd about this situation, almost as if it were the result
of some inexplicable force interfering in the normal functioning of
nature.

While the delay of winter is not ultimately responsible for Ivan's
fate (his eagerness to impress and foolhardiness are clearly more
to blame), there is more than a hint in Kriažhi that this
unexpected reversal in fortune, caused by the fragility of the ice
across the river, may owe its existence to bad luck. For the
superstitious peasant, however, bad luck rarely occurred without
good cause.\textsuperscript{68} Right from the very opening of this narrative, with
its description of a pagan idol found in the priest's threshing
barn, the author-narrator seems willing to play with sinister
explanations for events which have a mundane solution in reality.
It is a curious aspect of this story that on several occasions the
characters are shown in what appears to be a state of fear and
panic with regard to certain 'malevolent' objects, both animate
and inanimate. This could be viewed as a realistic (and comic)
expression of the backwardness of the region, something which would accord with its known ethnographic profile (in other words, as evidence of 'double-faith'). On the other hand, it could reflect a malevolent power which is inadvertently angered by human action. One conceit of this tale, surely, is that the two protagonists unwittingly come into contact with an 'unclean force' which eventually causes them harm; and the reader is constantly reminded of the presence of this danger every time the fictional characters are shown tempting Fate. If we interpret the failure of Ivan and María to unite in passionate love as an 'inexplicable' event, or as a 'breakdown' in the normal pattern of behaviour, then the allusions to peasant fears and anxieties with regard to malevolent forces cast an equally curious and 'inexplicable' pall over the narrative. It is almost as if Ivan owes his death, not to some wild recklessness on his part, but to the workings of a sinister, 'devilish' mechanism beyond the control of ordinary beings.

The paradoxical position which the author-narrator assumes with regard to these fears is evident from the very first lines describing the unearthing of a stone idol in the priest's threshing barn. Superficially, this incident has an amusing quality about it. The discovery of such an object on the priest's property, in addition to other hints later that he is perhaps not as 'orthodox' in his religious practices as might be expected (see his use of herbs for 'alcoholism' and 'carnal desire'), alludes to the phenomenon of 'double-faith' generally (the priest 'replaces' the site of a pagan cult, but the superstitious beliefs remain); there is also humour to be derived from the fact that such a rare and potentially
interesting archeological artefact should be dumped so carelessly on the side of the road, rather than preserved for posterity.\textsuperscript{70} For the peasants themselves, however, this discovery is no laughing matter. Since they were weaned on the teachings of the Church, for which all relics from the pagan past were routinely denounced as the work of the Devil, stone idols of this type would have been associated in their minds with pre-Christian forms of sorcery, black magic and 'spoiling' - in other words, the designation of this idol as a \textit{nechist} \textquotesingle in these opening lines by the author-narrator refers to the term for 'harmful' and 'devilish' forces in the popular imagination: \textit{nechist}\textsubscript{а} \textit{sila}.\textsuperscript{71} It is hardly surprising that the labourers treat this idol with a certain amount of care - in the process dismissing the possible usefulness of a prayer to St. Nicholas of Myra, the most popular saint in Russia among the common folk and one widely invoked for special protection against 'unclean forces' - and deposit it 'with respect' (\textit{s pochetom}), but without the priest's knowledge, by the side of the road (265).\textsuperscript{72} The remark that this \textit{nechist} \textquotesingle must be handled with 'caution' (\textit{opaska}), otherwise some kind of 'harm' (\textit{vereda}) might be triggered, is calculatingly ambiguous, since it could be an expression of the author-narrator's own apprehension (in other words, direct free speech), or an expression of the peasants' fear (indirect free speech); in addition, it is not clear which is the case even after the register of the language is taken into account.\textsuperscript{73} There is further ambiguity in the statement that this idol is responsible for the hostility between the two protagonists: 'Cherez etu samuiu nechist' i poshla vražda mezhdu Ivanom da Mar'ei (265). Does this refer to its responsibility for the breaking of Mar'ia's axle? Or is it more deliberately ominous? At this stage,
the reader is justified only in assuming that Ivan himself, as someone directly employed by the priest, is one of the unidentified peasants who undertake this delicate operation, and therefore might be in danger as a result of coming into contact with it.

The deliberate mention of this vereda and the fear it evokes among the labourers establishes a degree of dramatic expectation on the part of the reader which seems ultimately fulfilled by the end of the story: the text concludes on a note of symbolic closure, since both Ivan's death and his initial confrontation with Mar'ia occur while he is driving his cart and horse on a domestic errand. The scenes which follow this opening scene, moreover, seem to pursue further this idea of long-term peril or danger. It is a shishiga, an evil demon believed to inhabit the barns of domestic farmsteads, which causes Mar'ia to look over her shoulder at Ivan while collecting water in the forest, thus giving him cause to suspect that she is interested in him. Furthermore, Mar'ia's encounter with the sheat-fish in the Unzha on St. Peter and Paul's Day, while clearly orchestrated in part around a genuine fear of the fish's known predatoriness, physical strength and aggression, also alludes to the popular fear of the evil spirit of the river (vodianoï), an 'unclean force' intimately associated in the peasant imagination with the dangers of drowning. When Mar'ia first suggests releasing the fishing nets as a joke, her friends express their nervousness about the depth of the water: 'Da tut glyb', omut'ia' (267). Since it is afternoon, and not evening, Mar'ia decides that it is not dangerous to enter the water and release the net herself. However, the agitation of her friends intensifies
further when the dark, whiskered form of the sheat-fish is spotted lazily swimming below the surface of the water, since this is a fish rumoured in certain quarters to be the vodianoi's favourite mode of transport. Mar'ia's friends urge her to leave it alone and express their fear that it will drag her underwater and drown her, but her confidence and courage (or lack of superstitious fear) is such that she attempts to catch it instead. This is the reason, presumably, why her success astounds both her friends and the local fishermen (her instant reputation and the excitement with which the feat is discussed in the village are otherwise rather difficult to explain). The fishermen claim that the fish has been hit by a horse's hoof and is perhaps sleepy, but when Mar'ia leaps up and releases it they are shown to take a step back in fear, a reaction which surely cannot be explained simply by its size and strength (268). In the eyes of the superstitious girls, therefore, Mar'ia has seemingly challenged the evil spirit which inhabits the rivers and waterways and miraculously escaped.

Two further passages involve animals which were also traditionally associated in the popular mind with 'unclean forces': snakes and wolves. According to Chicherov, it was commonly believed that the demons and devils of the forests and fields were at the height of their powers during the winter period. St. Michael's Day was normally considered the time when these dark forces came to prominence - possibly due to apocryphal legends which told how the Archangel Michael himself brought all evil spirits into being when the earth was first created - but scare stories about the dangers of the woods would have referred to
the period from the fourth of October (St. Erofei's Day) onwards.\textsuperscript{82} This probably explains the episode described on the third day after the feast of St. Cosmas and Damian whereby a young boy is bitten by a snake and dies from the poison. This snake is believed by the village to be an 'unclean force' - the narrator describes its 'growing' into a \textit{zmei strashnyi} (a terrifying serpent), which echoes the use of the word \textit{strashennyi} in the case of the sheatfish and the use of the word \textit{strashno} in connection with the girls' superstitious fear of the river (267). As a result, the inhabitants give the area a wide berth.\textsuperscript{83} Likewise, St. Michael's Day signalled the appearance of a number of predatory animals - in particular, wolves - all of them designated \textit{nechisti} in the popular imagination. This is echoed in the priest's oft-repeated story about being attacked by wolves while returning home at night with geese for Christmas, a perilous journey during which he is forced to sacrifice them one by one in order to survive. This in turn echoes a number of cautionary tales for travellers repeated during the dangerous 'wolf month' (\textit{volchii mesiats}), a month normally lasting from mid-November to mid-December.\textsuperscript{84} Ivan sets off with a view to encountering these 'evil spirits' so that he can have something to boast about later on. But because it is a bright night with the moon shining, he is not attacked as he returns home during the middle of the night and makes it safely to the Unzha just in time for midday (270).

For all the expressions of fear in the narrative, and the fact that Ivan dies at a time roughly coinciding with Christmas Eve (a time when it was customary to tell stories of encounters with supernatural spirits),\textsuperscript{85} the reasons for his death are ultimately
mundane, if not banal - with the benefit of hindsight, it becomes clear that the author-narrator's flirtation with superstition turns out to be a further reversal of expectation in line with the pattern already established during the orchestration of events around religious festivals. This subversion of expectation is where the tension between ostensible author and implied narrator is located, with the imaginative world of the protagonists fully conveyed, yet never fully shared. There is also a lingering sense in which blame for the events should be attributed, not so much to the pride of the central protagonists, but to the values which the community shares as a whole, in other words, propriety, conservatism and stubbornness. The remark that the villagers themselves are 'calculating', and that there is nothing which escapes their attention - 'V Pozhoge narod na schetu, na vedú zhivet' (266) - gives a good indication of the suffocating nature of this community, and hints at a theme which is central to the description of provincial life in *Uezdnoe*. Zamiatin indicates a potential source of humiliation for Ivan in the fact that his initial rebuff and on-going failure is the subject of public knowledge. This predicament is further compounded by the teasing which he suffers at the hands of the local 'jokers' (*skomorokhi* [266]). Such teasing and 'gossiping' - 'Stali pro nikh iazyki tochit', stali ikh podzuzhivat' (266) - is inflicted just for fun (*dlia potekhi*), yet the fact that Ivan's death is prompted by a similar kind of 'teasing' at the end of the story lends this deliberate mocking a more ominous quality. The dark joke of the narrative consists of the fact that the *nechist* of the opening paragraph, rather than a genuinely demonic shaper of events, is little more than a sexual 'impurity', but it is this impulse, released into a
community which essentially fears it, which leads to tragic consequences.

As a vision of 'Old Russia', *Kriažhi* is essentially subversive. As a result of the stylization, the text pulls in two directions simultaneously. A pattern begins to be established in Zamiatin's short tales whereby the provincial 'narrators', while poeticising the exotic world of tiny, primitive communities on the peripheries of metropolitan consciousness, and at the same time taking unashamed artistic delight in obscure words and folk customs, give birth to fiction which emphasizes the deep frustration and oppression experienced by the people living in them. This is probably an honest response to the thorny issue of whether members of 'elite' culture should take it upon themselves to depict rural reality in the first place. A similar paradox lies at the heart of Zamiatin's next story, *Afrika*. The narrative, while evoking with extraordinary freshness the beauty and strangeness of a White Sea coastal village, tells the tale of a bitter and unhappy fisherman obsessed with travelling to Africa in order to start a new and better life. Like Ivan, who is clearly one of the poorest members of an already poor community, the illiterate hero of *Afrika* comes from the very lowest rungs of society. This focus on the most ordinary and unsophisticated members of society as repositories of strong, unequivocal, and in some cases primitive urges, qualities which Zamiatin himself plainly admired to a certain extent, is a characteristic feature of his rural prose; yet it is symptomatic of his world-view that the lives of these characters end tragically: social outcasts by birth,
then by choice, they die before their desires for both sexual and spiritual fulfilment can be realized.

---

1See *Slovo predostavliaetsia tovarishchu Churyginu* (II, 84). *Kriazh* was first published in the collection *Uezdnoe. Povesti i rasskazy*, Petrograd, 1916, and then subsequently (without authorisation) in a special 1916 Easter edition of *Rech*, the official newspaper of Russia's Constitutional Democrats (Kadets). It appeared alongside two stories by Remizov: *Dnes' vesna blagoukhaet* and *Tsar' Solomon* (*Otrechennaia povest*). Zamiatin refers to this embarrassing situation in a letter to Remizov dated 22 April (Old Style) 1916 from Newcastle upon Tyne. See 'Pisma E. I. Zamiatina A. M. Remizovu', op. cit, p. 177. All subsequent references, unless otherwise indicated, are to the version published in Neimanis (I 265-71).

2'**Bor - dremuchii, kondovyi...**'. See *Rus* (II, 44).

3'**Molcha moliatsia za liudei staritsy-sosny v klobukakh belykh**' (270). Shane (p. 125) mistranslates *stariitsa* as 'monk' (perhaps he was thinking of *startsy*). According to Dal', the word refers to an ancient old woman: 'prestarelaia starukha, samykh preklytoih let'. See Dal', IV, p. 317.

4Sergei Maksimov describes this settlement process in the Northern forests of Kostroma as follows. 'Nachali oni rubit' derev'ia toporom pod samyi koren', valit' vershinami v odnu kuchu i v odno mesto i zhech' (....). V severnykh lesakh, kogda nachali valit' ikh, ugubliaias' v chashchi s rechnykh i ozernykh poberezh'ev, prozvali takie novye mesta i valkami, i noviami, i novinami, i gariami, i roschistiami, i *pozhegami*, i podsekami, i pochinkami' (my emphasis). See Maksimov, '**U cherta na kulichkakh**', in his *Krylatye slova*, first published in 1890, reprinted in Sergei Maksimov, *Izbrannoe*, Moscow, 1981, pp. 393-397 [p. 395]. For *pozhog*, Dal' (III, pp. 222 & 223) refers the reader to the verb *pozhigat', pozhech'* (third person singular
perfection past: pozheg). See also the following entry for ozhech', obzhigat': 'opalit', prichinit' bol' ili vred ognem' (ibid., II, p. 580).

It is worth nothing that it is the 'spark' from Mar'ia's eyes - 'Ozhgla iskroi iz glaz' (my emphasis [265]) - which gives rise to Ivan's 'burning' passion.

5'Mestnost' gubernii prinadlezhit voobshche k chislu ravninnykh, vozvyshennosti sosredotochivaiutsia lish' v severo-zapadnom uglu kraia, ili tianutsia uzkimi kriazhami po pravym beregam reki Volgi, Unzhi, Vetlugi' (my emphasis). See Entsiklopedicheskii slovar', op. cit., vol. XVI, 1895, pp. 408-13 [p. 408].

6See ibid., p. 410.

7 'Vozvyshennosti eti narod nazyvaet "gorami", potomu chto ne znaet nastoiashchikh gor, pravil'nee schitat' ikh kholmami' - see ibid., p. 408. An example of this tendency is given in Pavel Mel'nikov-Pecherskii's ethnographic novel V lesakh (1875). See the text and editor's note in V lesakh, two volumes, volume 1, Moscow, 1958, p. 15. It is interesting to compare the opening lines of Zamiatin's story with Mel'nikov-Pecherskii's assessment of the areas lying to the east of the Volga river between Rybinsk and Kerzhenets: 'Staraia tam Rus', iskonnaia, kondovaia. S toi pory kak zachinalas' zemlia Russkaia, tam drugikh nasel'nikov ne byvalo. Tam Rus' sysstari na chistote stoit - kakova byla pri pradedakh, takova khranitsia do nashi kh dni'. See ibid., p. 14.

8This expedition, to an area lying roughly fifty kilometres east of Makar'ev, was undertaken in 1923 under the aegis of a body calling itself the Kostroma Academic Society. Their findings, published in a small booklet entitled Tretii etnograficheskii sbornik, include a brief article on various 'devil-tales' prominent in this region: 'V glukhikh zabroshennykh lesakh i zanesennykh snegom derevushkah, krest'ianskaia i narodnaia massa, v tolishchi kotoroi s trudom pronikaet politcheskaia i obshchestvennaia gorodskaiia mysli, gde neizvestna nasha iziashchina literatura, v znachitel'noi stepeni prodolzhaet zhit' chertovshchinoi, koldunami, rasskazami ob ognennykh zmeiakh.' See Vasilii Smirnov, 'Chort rodilsia', in Tretii etnograficheskii sbornik, part of the series Trudy Kostromskogo nauchnogo
obshchestva po izucheniiu mestnogo kraia, vyp. XXIX
(no place of publication is given), 1923, p. 17.
10Ibid.
11See the relevant entry in Dal', II, p. 208.
12Ibid. It is worth comparing this with the description of the
Northern poet Nikolai Kliuev by Ol'ga Forsh in her novel
Sumashchedshii korabl': 'pevets temnyi, s pronzitel'noi siloi uveta
- Mikula byl kriazhist, shirokoplech, s ogromnoi pritaennoiu siloi.'
Cited in B. A. Filippov, 'Nikolai Kliuev. Materialy dla biografii',
which forms his introduction to Nikolai Kliuev. Sochineniia, two
volumes, vol. 1, Munich, 1969, pp. 5-182 [p. 7].
13'Ty, brat, solidnyi ochen', da i uporisty, kriazhistyi. Tebia s
tolku ne sbit' - see Uezdnoe (I, 71). In Sever, the word is used
as Kortoma helps his hired hands shift a pile of heavy logs: ' - Nu
eshche! Nu-nu-nu! - sam vzialsia za lom. Pripliusnutyi, mednyi,
kriazhistyi naper - i kriaknul venets: tol'ko pyl' dymom' - see
Sever (I, 410). Ginsburg translates this adjective as 'chunky' in
Yevgeny Zamiatin. The Dragon & Other Stories, reprinted edition,
London, 1975, pp. 97-139 [p. 112].
14The adjective norovistyi, from the noun norov (i.e. nor',
means both 'stubborn' and 'attached to custom or convention'. See
Dal', II, p. 555. The adjective kriazhistyi is also used by the
author-narrator at the end of the story when Mar'ia is trying to
will Ivan back to life: 'Otzhive-eet eshche, u nas narod krepkoi,
kriazhistoi....' (271).
15This description of the characters' toughness and durability in
terms of wood has a parallel in the world of art, in particular the
wood carvings of peasant 'types' by the celebrated peasant
sculptor, Sergeii Konenkov, in the first two decades of the
twentieth century. Zamiatin mentions his work as a 'model' in a
letter to A. Dikii about the production of Blokha: 'Konenkov - eto
staroe, iskonnoe, kondovoe, russkoe - russkaia skazka, i eto
osnovnoi ton.' See 'Perepiska s E. I. Zamiatinym i B. M.
Kustodievym po povodu spektaklia "Blokha"', op. cit., p. 290. For
photographic reproductions of this artist's work, see Serguei
'Kogo libo chto liubim strastno, bezrazsudno, komu ili chemu pokloniaemsia, kak bozhestvu.' See Dal', II, p. 8.

See Shane, op. cit., p. 112.

See J. Graffy, 'Zamyatin's "Friendship" with Gogol´', op. cit., pp. 139-80.


Gleb Uspenskii described the importance of weather portents for the peasant farmer in 'Zemledel´cheski kalendar´', which comprises the sixth chapter of Vlast´ zemli (1882): '(....) ves´ god - trista shest´desiat piat´ dnei - imeiut kazhdyi beskislennoe mnozhestvo prim et, a khotia eti priemteni ne imeiut dla va, obrazovannogo chitatel`a, nikakogo znacheniiia, dazhe smysla, no zemledel´cheskiu narodnuiu mysli oni dostatochno-taki kharakterizuiut.' See G. Uspenskii, Polnoe sobranie sochinenii, six volumes, vol. 6, St. Petersburg, 1908, pp. 119-123 [p. 121].

konovod is likely to derive from the word kon, meaning either 'kitty', 'stake', 'bet', 'game' or 'round'. It seems to refer to the person who is always first to initiate games or pranks: 'zachinshchik (....) zateivala v igrakh, prokazakh.' See Dal´, II, p. 154. In the countryside the word zavodilo is synonymous with zapevalo, and refers to the leading position Mar´ia enjoys within the round-dance ritual as 'first singer'. Thus she can be compared with Mar´ka/Marinka from Kuny and Poludennitsa.

The sheat-fish, also known as the sheath-fish, is a large species of predatory catfish (Silurus glanis) and believed to be the largest kind of freshwater fish in European waters. Armed with an array of sharp teeth, its aggressive tendencies were well-known to fishermen and it was not unknown for young sheat-fish to attack and drown children, as well as geese and ducks. See Entsiklopedicheskii slovar´, op. cit, vol XXXV, 1904, pp. 353-54 [p. 354].

See A. Remizov, 'Stoiat´ .....', op. cit., p. 118.

Unzha tut ne shirokaia, vidno, kak na tom boku mashut rukami. Baby krichat - drazniatsia:
- Ei, vy, zaunzhenskie! A nu-ko, po pervoputku-to k nam?' (270).
The emphasis is mine.

25See Shane, op. cit., pp. 125-26; and Niqueux, op. cit., p. 53.
26'- So-onnyi, govorish?' - kak soskochit Mar'ia s soma, rybina
kak siganet, muzhiki kak popiatatsia...' (268).
27'Kopaetsia-shsha? Nu, i zhivuch, omrak strashnyi!' (269). The
word omrak is given in Dal' (II, p. 673) as a colloquial version of
obmorok, which itself derives from the verb obmirat', meaning'
to faint' or 'to momentarily lose consciousness'.
28'Otzhive-eet eshche, u nas narod krepkoi, kriazhistoi...' (271).
29For the various nuances of the word dur', see Dal' (I, p. 502).
For the peasant celebration of St. Michael's Day, see Maksimov,
30The key word in this passage is okunut'sia. Dal' gives the
meaning of 'to dive' and 'to swim under water' - see Dal', II, p.
670.
31"Kak nado" vygliadiat i glavanyegeroi novelly "Kriazhi": ikh
normativnost', podcherknuta i traditsionnoi parnost'i i muzhskogo
i zhenskogo imeni (Ivan da Mar'ia), i soedineniem v obrazakh
oboikh personazhei fizicheskoi krasoty i nравственноgo
zdorov'ia.' See E. Mushchenko et al., op. cit., p. 175.
32The first draft of the story is entitled "Kriazhi" ("Ivan da
Mar'ia") and is dated 12 December 1915. See the Zamiatin
archive at IMLI, fond 47, opis' 1, ed. kh. 26.
33In connection with a unpublished manuscript by Zamiatin's
friend and contemporary, Boris Pil'niak - entitled Ivan-da-Mar'ia
and dated 7 May (Old Style) 1920 - the Danish scholar P. Jensen
makes the following remark: 'As a title of a literary work it is rich
in association: naturalness - commonness - Russia - a certain
lyricism'. He associates the two Christian names with the 'typical
Russian youth and maiden since the days of folk poetry.' See P.
Jensen, Nature as Code: The Achievement of Boris Pil'niak 1915-
1924, Copenhagen, 1979, p. 156.
34Mel'nikov-Pecherskii mentions the cow-wheat flower in
connection with the folk rituals traditionally performed on June
22 and 23 of every year, the Eve of St. Agrippina (Agrafena-
Kupal’nitsa) and the Eve of St. John the Baptist (Ivan Kupala) respectively: ‘Sobiraiut dev’tsy vo edin krug i s pesniami idut verenitsei iz derevni sobirat’ ivan-da-mar’iu, liubovnuiu travu i liubistok.’ These are then used in steam-baths, ‘chtoby molodilos’, dobrym molodtsam liubilos’”. See Mel’nikov-Pecherskii, V lesakh, op. cit., p. 283.

There is a separate folkloric tradition attached to this flower - notably, various songs recorded in the Ukraine which tell of a brother and sister whose incestuous (but innocent) love for each other leads to their becoming transformed respectively into the blue and yellow petals of the flower itself. See A. Afanas’ev, Poeticheskie vozrreniia slavian na prirodu, first printed 1866-69, reprinted edition, Moscow, 1994, three volumes, vol. 3, pp. 722-23. Aleksei Tolstoi adapted these songs for his miniature fairy-tale, ‘Ivan da Mar’ia’, which was first published in 1910. See A. N. Tolstoi, Sobranie sochinenii, ten volumes, Moscow, 1958-61, vol. 8, 1960, pp. 69-72. However, nothing in Zamiatin’s story persuades me that this tradition might be relevant.

The first sequence in this collection, entitled ‘Suzhenaia’ (i.e. ‘the woman chosen by Fate’), tells the story of a young couple called Ivan and Mar’ia who love each other for three autumns, but whose parents refuse to allow them to marry. When Mar’ia is eventually paired off with another man, her health deteriorates and she dies on St. Cosmas and Damian’s Day; however, Ivan is later permitted to marry her ghost. The ‘Ivan da Mar’ia’ combination occurs in the penultimate line in the context of marriage: ‘(....) i na Krasnuiu gorku povenchali Ivana da Mar’iu.’ See A. Remizov, ‘Suzhenaia’, in Dokuka i balagur’e, op. cit., pp. 13-15 [p. 15].

‘V liubovnykh pesniakh risuetsia ideal’ naia para: oba khoroshi soboiu, prichem okazhet sia, chto krasota opredeliaetsia zdorov’em i sposobnost’iu k trudu. Eto - ”razudal dobryi molodets”, u nego "kudry rusye", ”litso beloe”, ”shchechki alye”. Sootvetstvenno risuetsia i krasnaia devitsa: ona krasnoshcheka i chernobrova. Ee brovi lezhat dugoi i sravnivaiutsia s soboliami.” See Propp, Narodnye liricheskie pesni, op. cit., p. 57. It is worth comparing this with Zamiatin’s two descriptions of Mar’ia: ‘khorosha devka,
brovi-to kak nakhmurila sobolinyel' (265); and 'chervonnaia, pyshnaia: tol' iko brovi sobol'i - strogie (.....)' (268). Ivan's curly hair is mentioned on two occasions and his strength is likewise stressed: 'Ivan-to, bogatyr' kakoi: sam-odin, svoim rukam, vsiu popovu delianku srubil. Dy kudriavyi, dy statnyi....' (266); and 'Ivan vse tak zhe vstriakhival kudlami rusymi' (269). The prized beauty of blond locks is illustrated in the round-dance song 'Kak za rechkoiu, kak za bystroiu,' quoted in Propp, in which a young boy is asked to sell his locks but refuses because he needs them in order to attract a future wife. See Propp, op. cit., pp. 194-95.

38'Pesni o liubvi slagaiutsia molodezh iu i vyrazhaiut zdorovoe stremlenie k sil'nomu, chistomu i postoiannomu chuvstvu (...). Milogo zovut v khorovod ili na guliante. Bol'shui rol' v takikh liubovnych pesniakh igraiut podarki, iz nikh samyi zhelannyi i luchshii - kol'sto (....).' See ibid., p. 15.

39Zamiatin indicates the preoccupation with match-making and marriage by his comment about the 'calculating' nature of the village as a whole: 'V Pozhoge narod na schetu, na ved' zhivet: skoro provedali, kakaia poshla razderiaga mezdu Ivanom da Mar'ei (.....): 'Ekh, Mar'ia, rabotnik-to popov, Ivan-to, bogatyr' kakoi (.....) vot by tebe takogo v muzh'ia' (266).

40Even in post-emancipation Russia, romantic love was still an ideal. See the discussion of this problem in Worobec, op. cit., p. 136. The theme of unrequited love was popular in love lyrics: 'Chashche, chem o schasthvoi liubvi, poetsia o liubvi neschastlivoi. Neschastlivoia liubov' vyzvana prepaiatstviiami. Prepaiatstviia eti mogut byt' vnutrennego kharaktera, sostoiat' v slozhnostiakh vzaimnykh otnoshenii, ili vnesnego - v toi vlasti, kotoruiu nad molodymi imeiut starshie i ves' uklad otstoiavsheisa traditionsnoi patriarchhal'noi zhizni. Togda nastupaiut tiazhkie i tragicheskie konflikti.' See Propp, op. cit., p. 16.

41See Maksimov, Krestnaia sila, op. cit., pp. 477-79 [p. 477].
43Kalinskii quotes the observations of the foreign emissary, Adam Olearius, who visited Muscovy in the seventeenth century: 'U vsekh russkikh i moskvitian okolo petrova dnia otpravliaetsia
strannoe zrelishche. Khotia oni strogi i bezvykhodno derzhat zhen
v svoikh domakh, tak chto redko puskaют ikh v tserkov' ili v
gosti, no v nekotorye prazdniki pozvoliaют zhenam i docheriam
svoin khodit' na priiatnye luga; tam oni kachaiutsia na kruglykh
kacheliakh, poiut osobennye pesni, svodiatsia odna s drugoiu za
ruki.' See ibid.
44See Gromyko, op. cit., p. 168.
45'Etot den' rassmatrivaetsia kak zavershaiushchii v tsikle
khorovodov, poslednii v sezone vsplesk molodogo ozorstva.' See
ibid.
46Mel'nikov-Pecherskii describes drink as being an important
element of the St. Peter and Paul's Day festivities. See V lesakh,
op. cit., p. 377
47'...nakorogodiatsia devki da parni' (266). Zamiatin later uses the
term korogod for the round-dance (268), probably the local
equivalent for the more widely known khorovod. Other peasant
expressions for this ritual include tanok, karagod, and ulitsa.
See Gromyko, op. cit., p. 162.
48In rural communities, this was the term given to the items of
food which the young collected together for special festive
occasions or 'feasts'.
49See 'Kak po travke, po muravke' originally recorded by the
composer Nikolai Rimskii-Korsakov in the area of Tikhvin,
Novgorod province, and printed in his collection of folk songs
entitled Sto russkikh pesen dlia golosa s fortep'iano (1877).
Reprinted in Propp, op. cit., p. 193 (see also the commentary to
the lyric on p. 543).
50Zamiatin's impressionistic account may be compared with
Mel'nikov-Pecherskii's rather detailed description of the dancing
and singing in V lesakh, op. cit., p. 379.
51This reading depends on the interpretation of the word
ponozh' in the sentence 'Narane Petrova dnia uexkhali muzhiki
nevod stavit' na Loshadii ostrov, gde ponozh' loshadinaia kazhdyi
'god' (267). Dal' derives this word from ponozhi, i.e. chains and
fetters placed on the legs, as well as ankle-bracelets. See Dal', III,
p. 287.
In post-emancipation Russia, the exchange of gifts between a young man and woman was the first stage in a process which led initially to sexual intercourse, and then later to marriage. Women would weave belts or embroider towels, while young men would often give a kerchief, ring, or carved prialka (spinning distaff). See Worobec, op. cit., p. 142.

According to Dal’ (II, p. 616), the word obrot’ referred to a certain type of bridle in which there was no bit or ‘snaffle’ between the teeth. Hence his explanation for the phrase obrotat’ loshad’, which refers to the placing of such a bridle on a horse, and his noting of the humorous expression obrotat’ parnia, which in colloquial speech meant: 'to marry'. See ibid.

'А u mesiat'ya zoloty rogi,/A u solnyshka ochi iasnye;/ U Ivanushki kudry rusye/Po plecham lezhat,/Slovo zhe goriat./Ch’i zh eto byli vymysly,/Chtoby Vaniushku zhenit’/Eto byli vymysly/Rodnoi Matushki,/Sidia v gorenke,/Pod okoshechkom,/Pod okoshechkom/Pod khrustal’nenkim/I pod steklyshkom.' This song is sung on the wedding day itself. See Propp, op. cit., p. 282.

This is the name given to the festival by Maksimov. See Krestnaia sila, op. cit., p. 519.

Archbishop Makarii's Lives for the first of November tells the story of how a young wife is saved from being tempted by the devil while her husband is away on business. See his Velikie minei-chetii, sobrannyye vserossierkim mitropolitom Makariem, eight volumes, St. Petersburg, 1868-1915, November 1-12, 1897, columns 9,10 & 11.

See Maksimov, Krestnaia sila, op. cit., p. 520.

See V. Chicherov, Zimnii period russkogo narodnogo zemledel’cheskogo kalendaria: XVI - XIX vekov, Moscow, 1957, p. 48.

The priest's knowledge of the healing powers of grasses hints at the possibility that he is considered the local znakhar’ - in other words, a doctor capable of curing illnesses in people and animals. See Maksimov, 'Znakhari-sheptuny', in Nechistaia, nevedomaia sila, op. cit., pp. 173-85 [173-74].
The superstitious fear of the snake is probably the result of an episode in the official zhitie which tells the story of how a peasant inadvertently swallows a snake while asleep during the harvest. He returns home and starts to feel terrible pains in his stomach. He prays to the saints Cosmas and Damian and the 'devil serpent' is forcibly ejected. Presumably, this episode would have been read out in church on the first day of the month. See Makarii's Velikie minei-chetii, op. cit., col. 9.

It may be relevant in this context that the two surviving drafts of Kriazhi preserved in the IMLI archive show the story to have been written in the month of December. The first draft is dated St. Petersburg, December 12, while the final version was completed in the same month. See IMLI, fond 47, opis' 1, ed. kh. 26 & 27.

Additional sayings are cited in Ermolev: 'Kuzma i Demian - provody oseni, vstrecha zimy, pervye morozy'; 'Kuz'ma-Demian - Bozhiu kuznets ( dorogi i reki kuetu)'; 'Ne zakovat' reku zim bez Kuz'my Dem'iana'; and finally: 'Dem'ianov put' - ne put', a tolko zimy pereput' e'. See Ermolev, op. cit., p. 522.

Koli Kuz'ma Dem'ian smostom, to Mikhailo s polumostom; and 'Kuz'ma zakuet, a Mikhailo raskuet (Mikhailovskie ottepeli)'. See ibid.

A ved' sviatki uzh na dvore' (270). Although the beginning of sviatki are normally associated with Christmas Eve, for many peasants in Russia they signified the period of 'gay' and 'noisy' festivities which ran from St. Nicholas Day (December 6) right up

68It is worth noting that 'luck' is hinted at in the context of Mar’ia's button as it bursts off her shirt: 'Da na grekh tut oborvalas’ pugovitsa u baski' (265).

69It was common in Russian villages to attribute the skills of the local znakhar’ in some measure to a dubious 'collaboration' with 'unclean forces': 'Strogo govoria, my ne imeli by nikakogo prava prichisliat’ etikh liudei, promyshliaiushchikh lecheniem boleznei, k kategorii tekh, kotorye znaiutsia s nechistoi siloi, esli by suevernye, osnovannye na predrassudkakh, poniatia eshche ne gospodstvovali vlastno v narodnoi srede. V derevenskom zhe bytu prodolzhaiut smeshivat’ znakharei i vorozhitov, znakharok i vorozhei s charodeiam i, t.e. koldunam i koldun´iami.' See Maksimov, *Nechistaia, nevedomaia sila*, op. cit., p. 172.

70According to Rybakov, stone idols made up only a very small percentage of pagan idols generally, the majority being sculpted from wood. See illustration no. 47 in B. Rybakov, *Iazychestvo drevnei Rusi*, op. cit., p. 235.

71Dal’ defines the noun nechist’ in terms of uncleanliness, sickness, sexual disease, filth and poisonous insects. However, the semantic link derived from the expressions nechistaia sila and nechisty, synonyms in common parlance for the Devil and Satan, are surely obvious. See Dal’, II, p. 543.

72‘Tam - Nikola sebe Nikoloi’ (265) - in other words, 'It's all very well there being St. Nicholas, but....' A useful discussion of the popularity of St. Nicholas of Myra, known in Russia as Nikolai chudotvorets, or more colloquially Nikola or Mikola, is given in Ivanits, op. cit., pp. 24-26.

73The words opaska and vereda are dialect-based and local equivalents for the more usual opasenie and vred - see Dal’, II, p. 677 and I, p. 260. It could therefore be argued that this sentence belongs to the 'voice' of the labourers. On the other hand, the author-narrator employs dialect himself in statements elsewhere: vrazhda (265), korogod (268), shishiga (266), galdet’ (268), and so on.
It was widely believed among the peasantry that deep pools of water, whether ponds or rivers, were the dwelling place of the vodianoi, a malevolent spirit which did not hesitate to drown those who trespassed through his watery kingdom. Fishermen were particularly prone to this superstition, and often threw back part of their catch into the river as a sacrifice, although there is some dispute regarding the extent to which this particular superstition had survived into the twentieth century. For various fabulates about this spirit and a general discussion, see Ivanits, op. cit., pp. 70-74 & 182-85; and Maksimov, Nechistaia, nevedomaia sila, op. cit., pp. 81-99.

The words glyb', from glubina (see Dal’, I, p. 356), and omut'ia (from omut) are standard expressions - hence the Russian proverb: 'v tikhom omute cherti vodiatsia' ('devils breed in deep waters').

'Pod vecher bud' delo - brosili by, a seichas ono ne tak uzh i strashno' (267). According to Russian folklore, the most dangerous time of the day to risk bathing was either at noon or after dark. See Ivanits, op. cit., p. 72.

Khorosho osvedomlennye liudi privychno ne ediat rakov i golykh ryb (v rode nalimov i ugrei), kak liubimykh bliid na stole vodianogo, a takzhe i somovinu za to, chto na somakh vmesto loshadi ezdiat pod vodoi eti cherti.' See Maksimov, Nechistaia, nevedomaia sila, op. cit., p. 94. He describes the whiskered som as a 'river giant' (rechnoi bogatyry) and 'road-side bandit' (pridorozhnyi razboinik) which loves to inhabit the same deep, dark and root-bestrewn pools as the vodianoi. See ibid., p. 91.

'Som, somiaka! Batiushki, nu i strashennyi! Oi, begi, Mar'ia, v vodu utianet' (267). The final three words are the standard way of expressing fear of drowning by a malevolent spirit.

A number of accounts tell how the bravura of a diver or swimmer angered the vodianoi.' See Ivanits, op. cit., p. 72.
Slабление и умирание светоносного начала отображалось в народных поверьях и легендах о получении зловещими силами рака — смерти большем и возможности для своих вредоносных действий.' См. Чичеров, оп. цит., с. 35.

См. там же, с. 35-36; и Иванит, оп. цит., с. 45.

3. It is interesting that this particular episode in the story echoes directly the ethnographic report mentioned in footnote eight of the present chapter about 'fire-breathing dragons'.

4. 'Около Филиппова дня (14 November - PC.) волки стаи становятся и начинают бродить и позже приближаться к жилищам людей подбирать сиа (...) и то так и на запоздалого путника в лесу целой стаи набрасываться сиа, а то и звереночку зарезать.' См. Чичеров, оп. цит., с. 37.


6. The expression 'на выдуг' must be connected either with *vedat* ('to possess information') or *vest* ('to know').

7. См. footnote 24 of the present chapter.
CHAPTER THREE

(The North)

Afrika

In a speech delivered in 1924 to celebrate the fortieth anniversary of Fedor Sologub's literary activity, Zamiatin elected to discuss the theme of dream-obsession and reality. He argued that Sologub's fiction was full of characters whose insatiable appetite for the transcendental led them to reject 'warts-and-all' reality in favour of shimmering visions of the beyond. Like the chivalrous Don Quixote de la Mancha, a character with whom Sologub apparently identified himself, they were eccentric searchers on a quest for the unrealizable dream, deluded 'knights' whose fierce attachment to their inner, private visions gave them a hyper-sensitive aversion to the truth - namely, that their beloved 'Dulcinea del Toboso', a symbolic figure of unblemished purity, virtue and nobility was in fact none other than the unremarkable peasant girl, 'Aldonza'. Finally they were killed off, spared the humiliation of this painful discovery by the merciful nature of their author-creator, their dreams still intact.

Afrika conforms closely to the basic paradigm examined in this essay. Although it predates the speech by eight years, the story's exploration of the twilight zone between dream and reality, and its use of a seemingly celestial, female figure, associated symbolically with the colour white to imply the existence of a
higher, transcendental reality, to a great extent anticipates Zamiatin's reading of the 'eternal feminine' theme as it occurs in the work of Sologub and the Symbolist poet, Aleksandr Blok. In fact, the interrelated themes of 'dream-quest' and 'enchanted lady' feature regularly in his remarks about these two artists, and can be traced back via a lecture on modern literature at the People's University of Lebedian in 1918 to a review of Blok's courtly romance, *Roza i Krest*, as early as 1914. In terms of situation, image and symbol there is much in common between Zamiatin's Northern tale and various, quasi-mystical Symbolist narratives: Blok's *Prekrasnaia Dama* collection, which embodies spiritual aspirations in the form of a mysterious, beautiful woman; the self-parodying *Balaganchik* (1906), a play in which the love-lorn hero awaits with trepidation the arrival of his beloved Columbine, a mysterious figure dressed purely in white, who is equated symbolically with death and described by the Mystics in the play as an 'insubstantial ghost' and a 'girl from a distant shore'; and lastly, *Roza i Krest* itself, a courtly romance set in medieval times in which the themes of journeying, idealised love and dream fantasy are subtly interwoven into the text.

At the same time, however, *Afrika* is a turning point in Zamiatin's early period: it is a mongrel product which combines this Symbolist paradigm with the stylistic conceits of literary populism. A similar experiment was being conducted in prose around this time by Ol'ga Forsh, a 'neo-realist' prose writer with whom Zamiatin was initially compared. Their shared objective, it seems, was to 'democratise' the subject, manoeuvring it several
notches down the social scale, away from the essentially aristocratic, courtly and intellectual milieu into the very heartlands of the peasant imagination - in Cervantesian terms, the equivalent of Sancho Panza swapping roles with Quixote. The result is a comic, almost parodic tension which automatically deflates the serious, somewhat abstract musings of the Symbolists. The very ordinariness of Zamiatin's protagonist, an illiterate and inarticulate fisherman called Fedor Volkov, who shares a bedroom with his faithful hunting dog until the day before his wedding, stands in hilarious contrast to the habitual medium of Symbolist reverie - the gaunt, decadent poet. Unlike Blok's Balaganchik, moreover, which floats gently in the octane-filled ether of pure theatre, and is based on French models, Afrika is anchored securely to the topography of the Northern Russian landscape and couched in the colloquial language and dialect of the settlements along the White Sea coast. This endows the text with a rough and ready feel from which the giddy transportation into dream is effectively juxtaposed. In effect, writers such as Zamiatin and Forsh create a new type of mechtatel', one of poor peasant extraction whose tireless and comic pursuit of chimera reflects a general predisposition among the narod towards belief in the magical and the supernatural. The poetics of neo-realism dictated that these flights of fancy be expressed in terms of popular fantasy; and it is precisely as an example of post-Symbolist lubok, with the usual stylistic and ethnographic conceits, that I propose to examine Afrika in this chapter.
In common with Sever (1918), which forms the second part of Zamiatin's so-called 'Northern trilogy', the narrative action of Afrika takes place in a small village situated along the western (Pomorian) shore of the White Sea, just south of the Arctic circle. Despite a degree of confusion regarding the dating of the story, it seems to have been written after a lengthy stay in the Pomor' e region for the better part of 1915 - Zamiatin later named the port of Kem', the town of Soroka (now Belomorsk), and the famous Solovetskii islands among the places he visited. Significantly, this was another area mentioned in his lectures at the House of Arts as the cradle of authentically spoken Russian, possibly because of the large numbers of Old Believers who had settled there both during and after the religious persecutions of the Great Schism.

It was still a relatively remote area by the time of the First World War, yet had already acquired something of a reputation among Slavophiles and Populists. Sergei Maksimov had spent a year in Kem' on an official ethnographic mission sponsored by the Imperial Naval Ministry, later recording his detailed impressions in the celebrated God na Severe (1859). Leskov had travelled to the Olonets region in 1893 and produced two articles about Karelian folk-belief for the ethnographical journal Zhivaia starina. A. Grigor'ev had undertaken an important expedition to the Pinega region of Arkhangelsk from 1899 to 1901, returning with recordings of Northern epic ballads and historical songs. Ivan Bilibin, the graphic designer and illustrator, had spent three brief summers in the North from 1902 to 1904 while researching wooden churches, producing on his return a long article on Northern popular culture for Mir iskusstva and several paintings which were subsequently used for charity postcard designs.
(three of which were landscape scenes from the Kem area itself). Finally Mikhail Prishvin, the agronomist-turned-novelist, had trekked along the Letnii and Dvina shores of the White Sea and recorded his impressions in a series of literary anecdotes published under the title *Za volshebnym kolobkom* (1908). Although Zamiatin was not visiting this area voluntarily - presumably he was contracted to work there because of the war with Germany (although it has been suggested that he was exiled to Kem' after the *Na kulichkakh* 'affair' in 1914) - he may well have been aware of this cultural interest in the North. It is more than likely that he had read the poetry of Nikolai Kliuev, a poet who hailed from Olonets region; moreover, his friendship with Prishvin, which developed after their mutual acquaintance in the editorial offices of *Zavety* in 1913, meant that he had probably read *Za volshebnym kolobkom* prior to his stay in Kem'.

The allusion to the magical kolobok at the beginning of Prishvin's narrative - with its implicit warning of the dangers inherent in leaving the 'family hearth' - and the mention of Africa itself as an escape fantasy entertained by the author as a young child (recalled as he crosses the White Sea by boat) are strikingly germane to the theme of Zamiatin's tale.

*Afrika* is the tale of a simple man's fierce desire to reach Africa, a place in which all his hopes and dreams for the future have been invested. Structurally, the text is divided into four, more or less equal parts. The opening chapter introduces the reader to the main protagonist, Fedor Volkov, an illiterate fisherman with seal-like eyes, a crock-like head, and short, cropped hair, who inhabits a small, isolated village called Keremet', which is situated along
the White Sea coast. The notion of travelling to Africa is first planted in his mind by a trio of cultured, well-heeled travellers - two gentlemen and young girl - who arrive unexpectedly on a ferry and decide to stay the night before moving on the next day. For Volkov, who is delegated to row them ashore and show them to their lodgings, they are exotic in every way. He is fascinated to hear them occasionally slipping into a foreign language and concludes that they must be from abroad. Naively (they are presumably educated Russians from St. Petersburg switching occasionally into French), he asks them where they are from. They laugh, winking at each other, and reply that they are from Africa. Volkov is astonished: 'Iz A-afriki? Da neuzh i po-nashemu tam govoriat?', he asks them, to which they respond: 'Tam, brat, na vsekh iazykakh govoriat...' (277). Volkov is impressed. He is even more impressed when, after having shown them to their lodgings - a cabin owned by a local man called Pimen - he sits down by the gate outside and overhears the young girl singing. It is a sad, enchanting melody, one which has a powerful impact on him, so powerful that after everyone has gone to bed and the village is bathed in the surreal light of a Northern white night Volkov imagines that he has arisen and returned to the hut where the young girl is waiting for him by her bedroom window. In his dream (or is it real?) she leans out of the window and embraces him, claspıng his head gently to her chest and exuding as she does so a striking perfume. The next day, unsure of the true nature of this encounter, Volkov is initially suspicious when the girl invites him to visit her in Africa. Perhaps it doesn't exist, he says cautiously, suspecting that they are trying to make a fool
of him. As he bends down to kiss her hand in parting, however, he thinks he recognises the perfume from his dream:

Nagnulsia v nizkom poklone Fedor Volkov i pokazalos': ot ruki - tot samyi, tot samyi dukh, kotoryi vo sne... (279).

From this moment onwards, he believes in Africa, and gives his word that he will come and visit her.

If the first part of this tale consists of a surreal vision, the second part witnesses Volkov trying to recapture the beauty and strangeness of his dream in the circumstances of ordinary life. He experiences an uncanny sense of \textit{déjà vu} one evening when he catches sight of Pimen's eldest daughter, lausta, sobbing quietly at the very same window as the mysterious girl from abroad. Volkov is struck by the coincidence, and quite enchanted, since the light of the moon gives her a spectral beauty and grandeur far removed from her daily countenance. Lausta tells him that she is miserable and unhappy: she is past marrying age and her father has been nagging her to find a husband so that he can marry off his two younger daughters. Volkov feels sorry for her, and again, as before, finds himself consoling a sorrowful young woman by the bedroom window of Pimen's \textit{izba}. We are told that he courts her every night for much of the spring, before deciding to propose marriage at the beginning of summer. Daytime reality quickly intrudes into their relationship, however. The previously shy and retiring lausta, horrified by the filth in her new abode - hilariously, Volkov has kicked his faithful hunting dog, latoshka, out of the bed only the day before his wedding-night! - puts her
foot down on the subject of cleanliness: the magic spell of their courtship is shattered. Volkov starts to disappear at night, wandering down to the beach where he can be seen staring out to sea as if half-expecting the visitors from abroad to return. Soon he is in trouble with his father-in-law, Pimen, who nags him to repair his severed relationship with his young wife, or at least to spend his nights in bed with her at home for the sake of marital propriety. This pressure estranges Volkov even further from his adopted family, and indeed drives him to drink as the autumn nights begin to draw in.

The extent of Volkov's unhappiness can be gauged by the seriousness of his drinking problem, which worsens as autumn turns to winter. Chapter Three opens with Volkov being locked up for his own safety in the upper storey of a house (teremok), from which he tries to escape by jumping out of a window into a snow-drift below. His miraculous recovery from what can only be described as a failed suicide bid - he is pulled out the next morning barely alive and spends the entire winter in the local bania until he feels better - convinces him that he must seek out his destiny and find the young girl, even though he is now burdened by a heart condition: '(...): tol´ko doekhat´ do Afriki', he says to himself hopefully, 'tam uzh poidet po-novomu' (283). After a midnight mass during the Feast of Prepolovenie he approaches his local priest for 'spiritual advice'; but the ageing Father Seliverst simply laughs at his absurd desire to reach Africa. By chance, however, Volkov encounters a monk who has stopped over at Keremet' to pick up volunteers for work in monastery fields across the sea, and in turn is referred to an
experienced old whaler named Indrik. An archetypal sea-captain with black cap and grey beard, Indrik hires hands for whaling expeditions from Sviatoi Nos, a tiny peninsula at the point where the White Sea flows into the Barents Sea, and is renowned for his travels around the world and his tales of wild and exotic adventures. Volkov recalls him vaguely from his childhood, a time when his father worked with Indrik as a harpoonist, and remembers above all his sad eyes and grave demeanour. Indrik not only treats his inquiries respectfully, but confirms the existence of Africa and tells him that he can reach it by steamship; indeed, he offers the excited Volkov the possibility of sailing with him aboard his schooner as a harpoonist in order to pay for his journey: two whales, and his long sought-after goal will finally be reached.

With much agitation and excitement, Volkov embarks on the fourth and final leg of his journey. Indrik's schooner slips anchor and moves slowly northwards into a strange world of mists and summer white nights. To pass the time, Indrik tells Volkov stories about Africa: about the bread-fruit which grows on trees, the elephants which trumpet into the tropical air, and the flowers whose fragrance is so powerful that, once inhaled, it can never be forgotten. The ship ploughs further northwards. The all-pervasive mist makes it impossible to judge the direction of the boat, while the white nights confuse the boundaries between day and night, rendering imprecise the notion of passing time. As reality itself becomes clouded, so Volkov's mind starts to become confused and his dreams lose their earlier vividness. He begins to suspect that his earlier vision of the young girl may have been a deceit. His
weak heart pumping with excitement, he begins to feel dizzy the moment he catches sight of the first whale, and temporarily blacks out without really remembering how he managed to harpoon it. After two days tracking a second whale, during which time Volkov has been forced to stand loyally at his cannon, he is on the verge of physical and mental exhaustion. When the whale suddenly appears within range and the moment arrives to fire, the strain on his heart because of his nervous agitation becomes unbearable. As the harpoon is released, hurtling faster and faster towards its target, Volkov experiences heart seizure and collapses at the prow of the schooner, dying just at the moment the harpoon lodges harmlessly near the tail. 'Est' Afrika. Fedor Volkov doekhal' (287), the narrator observes, wryly; and with these words, the story is brought to a close.

On the level of realism, Afrika fits neatly into the pattern of poetic image-making initiated by Zamiatin's predecessors - indeed, the topographical images of the North which these writers present are reflected to a striking degree in the seafaring kolorit of his tale. The karbas, for example, a fishing-boat manufactured solely along the White Sea coast, is mentioned by Maksimov, who gives a detailed explanation of its construction. Additional picture elements in common include poetic images of ducks (278), mention of the capricious North-Easternly wind (polunochnik ([282]), salmon-fishing (the industry from which the pomory mostly made their living [278]), poetic descriptions of jellyfish (286), metaphoric comparisons between lazy fishermen and seals, and the presence of samoedy on the Kola Peninsula (284), all of which surface in Prishvin. In his Za volshebnym kolobkom,
likewise, there is a dream-like evocation of a white night which the author experiences as he travels along the coast by boat.\textcolor{red}{^18} The general level of poverty in the area, and its occasional dependence on outside supplies of basic foods, is universally reported;\textcolor{red}{^19} so, too, is the traditional distrust of outsiders, intimated in the opening lines of \textit{Afrika} when the \textit{pomory}, having received their supplies of salt, flour and sugar, turn back coastwards as soon as possible without indulging in pleasantries (277).\textcolor{red}{^20} By far the most important feature of this landscape, however, was the existence of several Old Believer communities dotted along the coastline. Maksimov is introduced to a scriptural expert (\textit{nachetchik}) during his stay in Kem\textsuperscript{\textasciitilde}, and claims that it is not unusual to encounter such scholars, even in tiny communities outside the main towns.\textcolor{red}{^21} It is unsurprising, then, that Zamiatin's fictional village of Keremet\textsuperscript{\textasciitilde} should also boast schismatics in its midst. We are told that Pimen, the father of Iausta, is the cousin of a \textit{nachetchik dvoedanskii} (277) - in other words, a person well-versed in the scriptures and a 'secret supporter of the schism'.\textcolor{red}{^22} As we shall see, this important ethnographical detail not only buttresses the author-narrator's claim to intimate knowledge of the area, and underlines the impression of authenticity, but also contributes to the development of his theme. For it is Volkov's clash with his father-in-law which supplies one of the vital dramatic conflicts in the plot and causes him ultimately to consider leaving.

Old Believers were generally regarded as austere and disciplined people with strict moral codes, puritanical inclinations, and a strong belief in pre-Petrine Russian tradition.\textcolor{red}{^23} Pimen's
schismatic allegiance, aside from the purely family connection, is made explicit on a number of occasions: the adjective dvoedanskii is used four times in chapter two, either in connection with himself, or his izba; we are told that he does not attend evening mass at the local chapel, which would not have been permitted for a disciplined sectarian, but instead kneels to the ground by the rain-barrel outside his home and sings 'sweet' hymns to the Lord (281); his quayside cabin, in which the three guests are billeted, is specifically described as 'clean' (chisty [277]); and he has a traditional attitude to the custom of marriage, being impatient to marry off his eldest daughter so that he can arrange the marriages of the younger two (280). There can be little doubting the author-narrator's essentially negative, if not downright hostile attitude towards Pimen. He is renowned for his discipline, austerity and lack of charity - an illuminating case in point is the treatment of his domestic dogs, which periodically slink away from the household due to lack of sufficient food (279). Pimen himself is 'painfully thin' and small in stature, a sure indication (according to the author-narrator) of his tendency to 'nag and torment' others (280). First he nags his daughter lausta for not being able to find a husband; then he criticises Volkov for slipping out at nights when he should be at home with his wife, as marital propriety and 'God's law' dictate (281). Finally, when Volkov starts to drink out of sheer misery, Pimen unleashes a barrage of insulting epithets in his direction - 'beggar' (rvan'), 'parasite' (zhivoglot) and 'drunk' (propoitsa) - which causes his son-in-law to fly into a temper and threaten to leave for good (282). Indeed, it is Pimen's continual carping,
compared to the persistent whining of a mosquito, which leads ultimately to Volkov's departure.

Although it is not clear whether Volkov himself hails from a schismatic family (it would certainly have been uncharacteristic for his marriage to take place in an Orthodox church, although increasingly this was being permitted at the turn of the century), Pimen is exploited by the author-narrator as a crucial foil to Volkov's temperament and spiritual inclinations. Certain distinctions are drawn which plainly influence the reader's attitude to both men. Pimen's devotion to order and cleanliness, which Iausta has evidently inherited, is sharply and comically contrasted with Volkov's general slothfulness; moreover, his autocratic dominance as male head of the household, reflected when Iausta meekly observes the traditional wedding custom of removing her husband's shoes, is balanced by Volkov's democratic and generous instincts. Although a secret worshipper, Pimen prides himself on his respectability and social status; conversely, it is hinted by the author-narrator that Volkov is poor, disreputable and something of a social outcast. Not only does he fail to attend church regularly - Father Seliverst does not recognize him when he approaches for advice (283) - but he is unable to read and write, a handicap which distinguishes him sharply from the schismatic milieu generally. We are told that, like his deceased father, he is a notorious drinker whose alcoholic bouts cause moral censure on the part of the local community and lead to his being locked up in a tower for most of one winter (282). Moreover, by employing the word bobyd' (280) in relation to Volkov, a word which can mean simply 'bachelor', but in the
last century could refer also to a poor, landless peasant, one whose situation was caused by his lack of marital status, the author-narrator indicates both his social and sexual isolation within the village as a whole, as well as his lack of material wealth. It is instructive that, in order to pay for his trip to Sviatoi Nos, Volkov has to volunteer for casual harvest work at a monastery across the sea (the pozhnia [284], perhaps undertaken at the Solovki monastery). It is intriguing, also, that Indrik's description of Africa towards the end of the tale should be couched so precisely in a technical jargon which alludes specifically to the problems of farming in a hostile northern climate:

Khleb takoi v Afrike etoi, chto ni kamni ne nado vorochat', ni paly puskat', ni bit' koloch' zemlianuiu koporuiogoiu: rastet sebe khleb na drevakh, sam po sebe, bez prizoru, rvi, koli nado (my emphases, [285]).

Presumably this is an allusion to Volkov's recent work at the monastery, and another indication of the author-narrator's familiarity with life in the North. Yet at the same time it permits the reader a glimpse of Volkov as a social being, one whose reasons for quitting his village are as much material as spiritual. In many ways he resembles the sectarian peasant in the Ol'ga Forsh short story, Afrikanskii brat, who also seeks a future in Africa due to dissatisfaction with his material circumstances. Like Volkov, this man is a peasant bobyl' who, because he has been refused access to a plot of family land after the recent death of his wife, decides to emigrate in order to improve his social
status - as he explains to his friends prior to his departure: 'Nikola u menia ni dvora, a tam chernomy-to - rovno tsar'\(^{30}\). On one level, therefore, Volkov's dream of meeting the young girl at night and being physically embraced by her can be read as a dream about the desire for acceptance by one's social superiors; indeed, the entire story can be interpreted as a wish-fulfilment fantasy on the part of a poor peasant to overcome his humble status and join the ranks of the 'civilized', a fantasy which subsequently proves an illusion and leads only to his death.

Volkov's leaving is an act of defiance against his community, one all the more touching because he does not know exactly what the future holds. If Pimen represents authority, convention, propriety and 'God's law' (in terms of the community in which they both live), then clearly Volkov's rejection both of him and his daughter is nothing short of a rebellion. As we have seen, the reasons for this revolt can be located partly in Volkov's material circumstances and future prospects. The Old Believer's traditional distrust of all things foreign, an unwritten code which Volkov knowingly breaches through his obsession with his visitors from abroad, also brings him into dispute with his father-in-law and the wider community at large. No less important is the spiritual dimension of their conflict, which can be witnessed in their different attitudes towards the meaning of love and charity, and the nature of transcendence. Volkov's desire to 'live anew', while couched explicitly in terms of a 'spiritual desire' (zhelanie dushevnoe [283]), should be distinguished from the strictly ascetic impulses governing Pimen's system of worship. A vital indication of this difference, comically, can be gauged by their
respective treatment of animals. Pimen's dogs are ritually abused and starved in a manner which reflects their master's overriding concern with self-deprivation, whereas Volkov's Iatoshka is given the freedom of the house and allowed to sleep in his master's bed until the day that Iausta arrives. Indeed, Pimen's harsh treatment of his dogs at the beginning of chapter two, and their regular attempts to escape his charge, symbolically presage Volkov's dissatisfaction with his circumstances and his decision ultimately to leave (the final scene at the end of the chapter two shows him snapping, dog-like, at his father-in-law and nearly biting his nose off!) It is significant that the time of day when Volkov escapes domestic supervision is when Pimen is praying to the Lord by the rain-barrel outside his home while evening mass is being conducted in the local church. It becomes increasingly clear as the narrative progresses that Volkov's spiritual life resides almost exclusively in the form of fantasy - during his initial encounter with the young girl, in his courtship of Iausta, and in his nights spent out sleeping in the woods. The nature of this fantasy life, moreover, lies at the heart of the story's symbolic structure. A kind of 'double-faith' opposition is brought into play which permeates both Volkov's consciousness and the symbolic level of the text as a whole, blending folk fantasy, superstition and the apocryphal with religious orthodoxy, the sacred and the canonical in what appears to be a statement about the true nature of spirituality for the typical peasant.

In the context of Volkov as peasant mechtatel', a useful perspective may be gained by comparing Afrika with Forsh's Zhar-ptitsei (1910), a tale with which Zamiatin may well have
been acquainted. This is the tale of a poor peasant's obsession with the Persian princess of the famous Russian fairy tale, a text which Benois and Stravinskii also employed for their ballet of the same year, *L'Oiseau de feu* (1910). Like Vólkov, the hero of Forsh's story, a peasant called Ivan Lapotok, is a dreamer who gazes at the moon at night and easily confuses the world of fantasy with that of reality (his motto: 'skuchno zhit' dnem').

The plot details his obsession, first with a skilled seamstress, Steposha, whose celebrated embroidery designs intoxicate him with their exotic colours and motifs, reminding him of the firebird tale which he was first told as a young child. He courts her, temporarily beguiled by her nocturnal appearance into thinking that she is the reincarnation of the fabled princess, and later offers his hand in marriage. Her daylight appearance, however, causes him some consternation and disappointment. Disillusioned, he allows himself to become obsessed with a second love-object, a gypsy-girl called Grun'ka, who also reminds him temporarily of his lost princess. This time it is her voice which enchants and beguiles him:

- *Kak zavela Grun'ka golosom, - zagovoril on nakonets, raduias', chto iazyk nazyvaet kak raz to, chto nuzhno, - kak zavela golosom, a mne voda vdrug nezdeschniaa pomereschchilas', zelenaia... dno vidat'. A nebo nad vodoi si-i-nee, derev'ia belym tsvetut, krugom dukh takoi sladostnyi. A i gde ta strana - ia ne znaiu.*

In a dream sequence not entirely unlike the white night episode in Zamiatin's *Afrika*, Ivan chases his beautiful singer through the
fog-shrouded night, only to be told that it will cost him twenty-five roubles for the privilege of hearing her sing. By this stage, Forsh's hero has sunk into such a trance that he nonchalantly kills his wife when she refuses to lend him the necessary money. Cruelly, Grun'ka accepts the money, but reneges on her initial promise.

Forsh's Za zharpitsei and Zamiatin's Afrika share obvious motifs in common: the enchanted female voice, the exotic perfume, the 'heavenly world' (nezdeshniaia strana), the surreal subversion of quotidian reality, and the treacherous female figure all point unambiguously to a shared artistic agenda. Nevertheless, certain important distinctions should be borne in mind concerning the characters themselves. Although both are poor and disreputable - Volkov is illiterate, while Ivan's surname, 'Lapotok', is the diminutive of the derogatory slang term, lapot', meaning 'ignorant' or 'retarded' - Zamiatin's protagonist is gentler than Forsh's and less prone to outbursts of frustrated, murderous aggression. The difference, possibly, reflects the two writers' respective artistic concerns. According to Tamarenko, Forsh's skill lay in highlighting the paradoxical impulses inherent in the peasant soul - on the one hand, 'the fundamental yearning for the beautiful'; and on the other, gross materialism, which often gave rise to a tragic explosion of passions with disastrous consequences. Such a tendency does not really apply to Volkov. On the contrary, Zamiatin stresses the naive, passive and trusting nature of his hero. Whereas Ivan Lapotok seeks the beauty of the fairy-tale because it reminds him of the innocence and enchantment of childhood, Volkov is driven by the urge to
understand a curious paradox: how a young girl, on the surface so happy and full of mirth, can produce such haunting, powerful and melancholic music. His motivation is thus primarily emotional, spiritual and artistic - hence the irony that it is his heart which reacts so vigorously to the visionary experience and yet, simultaneously, is the instrument of his death. Volkov is a victim of deception and external manipulation, rather than any internal contradiction in his own personality. While his natural gravitation towards the magical is undoubtedly one cause of his downfall, there is a strong sense in which he falls victim to 'supernatural' forces far beyond his ken, forces which control human destiny and decide human fate.

Even a cursory reading of the text gives the impression that Fedor Volkov's life lies in the hands of mysterious forces more powerful than himself. There is something enigmatic and ghostly about the characters who invite and encourage him to undertake his journey. The arrival by steamboat of the two gentlemen and the girl in the opening sequence is described as an 'unheard-of event' (277), the Gogolian echoes of which already sound the alarm-bells. The author-narrator is deliberately vague about the identity of the three travellers, both in terms of their native language and their origins. In particular, the girl's white night-dress, framed against the dark background of the hut window during the white night sequence, lends her a peculiarly spectral aspect, an impression reinforced both by the general strangeness of the description itself and the narrator's deliberate punning on the Russian word for perfume or aroma - *dukh* (279) - which can also mean 'spectre', 'spirit' or 'ghost'.

37 Indrik, the wise sea-
captain whose sad eyes see 'those things forbidden to ordinary mortals', seems to have prescient knowledge of Volkov's fate, remaining calm, even unaffected, when his newly-employed harpoonist collapses and dies at the prow of his boat (we note that he has taken a replacement along as a precaution [284]). It is worth remarking that all these characters are linked symbolically with the sea: the three travellers first arrive from over the sea; they are branded collectively izza[morskie (literally, 'from across the sea' [281]) by the hostile Iausta; Indrik is a sea-captain with wide experience of travelling across the sea; and Volkov himself has to travel across the sea to Sviati Nos, the place where Indrik handpicks men to join him on his whaling expeditions, in order to earn his passage. It is implied that people who have travelled widely across water belong to a different world, possessing a wisdom and tragic knowledge which is denied to the naive and childishly ignorant Volkov. Indeed, since his death takes place symbolically in the vicinity of water (in addition, it was a custom on Russian ships to bury the dead at sea), it is tempting to look for evidence of the archetypal folk 'drowning' text, as part of which an ordinary mortal is first enchanted, and then lured to his death, by the enchanting song of a female 'siren'.

One hint that water functions symbolically in *Afrika* occurs in a passage exactly half-way through the narrative which describes Volkov's deceased father's penchant for 'swimming' - a euphemism, we presume, for his habit of collapsing after too much alcohol and flailing his arms around drunkenly on the ground (282). We learn that Volkov has inherited this 'weakness', and shortly afterwards witness him diving out of a tall tower-
room into a snow-drift and 'swimming all night' before being rescued, barely alive, the next morning (282). What is interesting about this tiny fragment is the symbolic time-frame in which it appears. It occurs just prior to the author-narrator's mention of the Orthodox Festival of Prepolovenie, an event falling exactly half-way between Easter Sunday (the day of Christ's resurrection) and Ascension Day (the moment his body is taken up to heaven).38 This ancient religious festival was closely identified in the popular imagination with the mysterious and miraculous properties of water: priests conducted special blessings of rivers, streams and springs in the vicinity, taking as their cue Jesus' words to the Pharisees during the Feast of the Tabernacle, which equated water with spiritual nourishment and salvation.39 In certain areas of Russia, apocryphal legends emerged telling how the Virgin Mary was delivered from drowning as she tried to escape bandits by swimming across a river with the baby Jesus in her arms; according to this tradition, the Virgin Mary prayed to her infant son to help her and was miraculously blessed with a 'third hand' to help her swim to the other bank - hence the peasant expression for this feast-day, preplavlenie, meaning literally, 'a swimming across' (from the Russian, pereplyt').40 In this context, it is significant that this colloquial term for the festival, preplavlenie, is echoed four times semantically in the first two paragraphs of chapter three in the sense of 'to swim' (plavat') and three times in the subsequent account of Volkov's harpooning expedition with Indrik in the sense of 'to sail' (plyt').41 Furthermore, Volkov is described in the same fragment as seeking objects to 'grab hold of with his hand' (rukoi ukhvatit'sia) for support as a result of his weak
Thus the reader is alerted to the possibility that it is this very tale of divine intervention, possibly heard within the community or in the church itself on the day of the festival, which prompts the gullible Volkov into believing that his own escape from the snow-drift must have been similarly miraculous, and therefore into seeking his own destiny by 'sailing across' to Africa. Ironically, while he is offered a 'third hand' in the form of Captain Indrik (or perhaps the harpoon which will enable him to earn the money to pay for his voyage), Volkov's passage is not guaranteed as safely, or indeed as miraculously, as the Holy Virgin's in the apocryphal tale; on the contrary, a mere mortal, Volkov symbolically 'drowns' before he reaches the other 'shore' (bereg).

Such a parodic and subversive orchestration of plot development around the folk-religious symbolism of certain Orthodox festivals is standard procedure in Zamiatin's provincial fiction: both in Kuny and Kriazhi, as we have already seen, this is one of his most important artistic devices. In the case of Afrika, however, the symbolic pattern spreads tentacles beyond the immediate textual vicinity. Both the Orthodox notion of water as spiritual nourishment, and the popular fear of water as an agent of death, inform the characterization of the two young women in the tale and dovetail nicely with the underlying themes of deceit and misrepresentation. Iausta, for example, is openly identified with the water-spirit (rusalka) of folk tradition, a supernatural being traditionally interpreted as the soul of the 'unclean dead' returned to haunt the land of the living. As with the Feast of Prepolovenie, the fragment in chapter two which starts with
Volkov encountering Lausta by the window of her father's cabin and ends with their eventual nuptials is organized around another fantasy of the folk imagination, this time the 'temptation-deceit-disaster' fantasy of the typical *rusalka* folk-fabulate. It is suggested initially that Volkov's initial attraction to Lausta derives from a trick of the moonlight which has the effect of magically transforming her into something enchanting and bewitching:

...Lausta li eto? U lausty volosy - kak rozh', a u etoi - kak voda morskaia, *rusal'*, zelenye. Lausta - rumianaia, razhaia, a eta - blednaia s golub'iu, gor'kaia. Ili mesiats vesennii zanevodil zelene-serebrianoi set'i tu, dnevnuiu? (my emphasis, 279).

The sea-green hair, the pale complexion, the unhappiness, the tears, and the hint of entrapment suggested by the 'nets' of the silvery moon are all archetypal *rusalka* motifs; and on two subsequent occasions - as Volkov consoles Lausta during their courtship, and later on their wedding night - the adjectives *rusal'ii* and *rusal'naia* are used explicitly. This symbolic orchestration is then pursued throughout the succeeding passage. It is symptomatic that the couple's courting takes place during springtime, the season in which the *rusalki* were believed to emerge from their ponds and rivers. Later, as the spring moon slowly begins to wane - the season is described as a 'shy young virgin' (*devushka zastenchivaia* [280]) - so Lausta emerges from the realms of inhibition into the world of 'blazing', physical reality. The marriage of the young couple takes place as spring is
replaced by summer, the time when the common folk celebrated
the rusalki leaving their ponds and rivers for the woods (the use
of aukat’ to describe the seasonal shift, a verb commonly used
by folk commentators to describe water-maidens 'calling' to each
other, is probably deliberate).46 Conforming to the traditional
rusalka theme, enchantment gives way to deceit and 'death by
drowning', although in this case the drowning is treated with
irony and assumes a symbolic, rather than literal dimension. For
Volkov, the eternal mechtatel’, his young bride's magical appeal
dissolves the moment she is revealed in broad daylight and
imposes strict domestic discipline modelled on sectarian precepts
(lausta is already scolding her husband the day after their
wedding as he walks across the floor in his dirty hunting boots);
while his 'drowning' occurs when he dives out of the room in
which he has been confined for the winter and 'swims all night' in
a snow-drift, barely surviving until morning.

The importance of this fragment goes well beyond the mere
courtship phase of Volkov's relationship. True, it lends this
episode an irresistible charm and emphasizes Volkov's innate
capacity for fantastic invention; yet at the same time it offers an
intriguing, retrospective reading of his first encounter with the
young girl from Africa. It is made abundantly clear, both through
symbolic juxtaposition (the identical time and place of each
encounter) and explicit comment, that lausta and the young girl
are essentially 'doubles', the difference between them being only
that while one emerges from the twilight zone of folk fantasy to
become Volkov's lawfully-wedded wife, and thus comes to
disappoint him, the other remains shrouded in mystery - aloof,
elusive and unsullied. Contained within the description of the young girl, for example, is an analogous series of motifs which, although less explicit, also establishes her kinship with the treacherous water-spirit of folk mythology. She appears to Volkov on a spring night - the month of May denoting the time when the *rusalki* traditionally first emerge; furthermore, she is associated with the element of water, not merely by virtue of her arrival by steamship from overseas, but through her symbolic link, via the colour white, with the crests of the incoming waves. Central to her characterization is the paradoxical display of merriment and melancholy, so typical of the *rusalka*, which first captures Volkov's heart and persuades him to seek his destiny by travelling to visit her; moreover, underpinning the entire edifice of this sequence is the enchanting and intoxicating power of the young girl's voice, the main instrument by which the mythical water-maiden lured her victims to their deaths. Volkov's suspicion that the three travellers might in fact be 'teasing' him (the verb used here is *poteshat'sia* [279]) also alludes unwittingly to the malevolent activities of *rusalki*, which usually took the form of teasing and tormenting their victims prior to dragging them to their deaths. Indeed, the fundamental link between the girl, the sea and the idea of playing a cruel joke on the hapless Volkov by inviting him to Africa has already been anticipated by the description of the ocean, which evokes the 'golden ringlets' and 'teasing, turquoise tongues' which the sun paints on the surface of the water as it skims across the surface just prior to his nocturnal vision. The entire undercurrent of lying and deception which underpins this episode receives its comic and ironic climax when Volkov accepts their offer and
solemnly promises to visit them: 'Moe slovo - bezoblyzhnoe' (279), he tells them - literally, 'My word is my troth'.

As we have already seen in Kuny, the rusalka conceit is nothing new in Zamiatin's fiction. However, the coastal topography of Afrika and the ethnographic conceit of the tale imply that Volkov's love-object should be viewed more as a mermaid or siren figure. In this context, it is worth mentioning that a mermaid-type figure drawn in the 'naive' style of a peasant wood-carving was used as a cover design for the book publication of Uezdnoe (the tale) in 1916, the year in which Afrika was first published.53 Furthermore, Aleksandr Blok's Roza i Krest, which Zamiatin reviewed in 1914, drew on popular Breton legends about sea-fairies and sirens in connection with the sunken city of Ys, located just off the North-West coast of France.54 Another influence might have been the curious, but by no means obscure apocryphal legend which gave rise originally to the popular belief that mermaids originally hailed from Africa. According to this tradition, related in the seventeenth-century Skazanie o perekhode Chermnogo moria ('A Tale About the Crossing of the Red Sea'), mermaids (faraonki) and mermen (faraony) were thought to be the souls of soldiers, women and children drowned when the waters of the Red Sea miraculously parted to allow Moses and the Israelites to escape from Egypt, and then cruelly rushed back to engulf and destroy their pursuers - hence the terms themselves, which derive from the Russian word for 'pharaoh'.55 If Zamiatin intended this allusion, it certainly adds a doubly ironic and cruel twist to the travellers' initial joke about coming from Africa. Yet such a reading fits neatly into the
symbolic pattern of the text as a whole. The young girl becomes the ghost of a person who has died while attempting to cross a stretch of water - hence her unhappy song, which we assume is a sad lament for her past fate, as well as the fate of all those who have drowned throughout the ages. Furthermore, the legend with which she is associated curiously parallels the apocryphal legend of the Virgin Mary identified with the Feast of Prepolovenie, both of which involve a watery crossing (a perekhod across the sea juxtaposed with a pereplavlenie across the river). This reading also makes sense of the author-narrator's concluding words: like the rusalka, mermaids and mermen were considered potentially dangerous beings whose appearance to seafarers and fishermen, and their singing of hypnotic songs in order to bewitch them presaged death. Thus by arriving in Africa, a metaphorical 'land of the dead' (indeed, the only place where all the languages of the world are spoken!), Volkov crosses the boundary which symbolically separates this world from the next and joins the mysterious girl beyond the grave, thus re-enacting her original fate.

In defence of this reading, it should be pointed out that Zamiatin's use of the mermaid/siren topos may have been modelled on local superstition among fishermen and whalers along the White Sea coast. According to Zelenin, a major authority on this subject in the nineteenth century, belief in polymorphic beings was widespread among the common people of Russia, irrespective of geographical region or religious creed - in his view, this could be witnessed by the popularity of wood carvings bearing mermaid designs on the boards of peasant huts right across the country.
The Russian North was no different in this respect. It is well-attested that the inhabitants of the White Sea coast were particularly prone to this type of 'double-faith' due to the sea's importance in their daily lives; in fact, it is believed that folk myths associated with the element of water survived in this region long after they lapsed elsewhere. It is known, moreover, that the Pomorians possessed a curious variation of their own on the Exodus theme, apparently believing that all the fishes and animals of the sea hailed originally from 'Pharaoh's Army'. As they were known to adopt certain behavioural patterns and act collectively, Pomorian whalers and seamen imbued them with human characteristics and suspected them of speaking a language of their own which humans could not comprehend. Bearing in mind the apocryphal origin of the mermaid myth in Russian folklore - we should recall that Pimen is the cousin of a scriptural expert - there seems little reason to doubt that superstitious fear of mermaids was part and parcel of folk-religious mentality in fictional Keremet.

If acceptable, this reading reinforces the impression gained previously in connection with the Feast of Prepolovenie - namely, that Fedor Volkov's story is refracted through a purely Russian, seafaring consciousness with solid roots in the ancient past and an imaginative view of the world which embraces sacred writing, apocrypha and folkloric superstition - plainly, a reflection of the actual ethnographical identity of the region's inhabitants. Such a poetic texture mirrors closely Zamiatin's insistence on narratorial authenticity. Yet at the same time the use of the mermaid topos, and the criss-cross pattern of sea imagery with which it is
intimately linked, offers an alternative 'folk' reading of Volkov's eventual fate. His death, rather than the accidental (and even comic) result of a heart attack brought on by temporary overexcitement, becomes instead the tragic working-out of a fate which has already been predetermined - indeed, it is this doom-laden feature of his condition generally which lends his journey a certain tragic pathos. Central to this reading, inevitably, is the symbolism of the sea. The ocean as the embodiment of wisdom, and its paradoxical role as life-giver, as well as life-destroyer, is a theme in literature as ancient as antiquity itself, and one which informs virtually all folk myths about dangerous women who emerge from its hidden depths to seduce and tempt innocent mortals. This has a special resonance in a story about a fisherman shown hunting and catching fish, and therefore directly and physically 'sustained' by the fruits of the ocean himself; moreover, it is an ironic reversal that a fisherman should himself be caught in a net - the silvery-green 'nets' (seti) of an ocean mermaid. Additional pathos is gained from the Pomorian legend about the decimation of Pharaoh's Army: the language Volkov hears the travellers speak when he first meets them can be read as the 'language' of all the animals of the ocean, and therefore of the ocean itself. It is no coincidence that Volkov dies while trying to harpoon a whale which torments and teases the crew of Indrik's schooner for two days before finally coming within their sights; or that the jellyfish which explode into silvery-green, glittering stars as Volkov leans over the side of the boat and stares into the water - an image which glances back to the silvery-green hair of the 'rusalka', Iausta - lead him momentarily to mistake them for the life-giving flowers of
Indrik's vision of Africa, until he realizes that he must be dreaming (286). It is the ocean, and the sense of wonderment, enchantment and danger with which it is associated which is 'Africa' as far as the folk-religious imagination is concerned.

The real Africa, of course, is described by Captain Indrik, yet even he is aware of Volkov's final destination. The stories and tales with which he sustains Volkov during their hunting expedition implies knowledge about faraonka legends; moreover, his crucial symbolic link to the young girl and her male companions is emphasized and underpinned on several occasions. In common with the acoustic link which his name shares with Africa itself (the -rik sound), Zamiatin's sea-captain can be located within another symbolic pattern at the very heart of the narrative: the never-setting sun, the white night, eyes which never sleep, the sea and the girl herself. All these images point unambiguously to approaching death. When Volkov walks along the row of huts during the dream sequence, for instance, he observes a white eider-duck sleeping with its eyes open on a rock: if he wakes the duck, we read, the bird will fly away, the white night will disappear, the young girl's voice will fall silent, and the vision itself will dissolve. The images in this passage, with their insistent repetitions of sound and visual shape, are peculiarly effective in conveying the uncanny quality of Volkov's dream; yet it is the open eyes of the duck above all, with their suggestion of sleep-walking and hypnotism, not to mention death itself, which supply the primary estrangement device. Significantly, when 'open eyes' are employed again in the story to describe the summer nights as Volkov wanders off into the
woods to escape his father-in-law, the image has undergone a subtle metamorphosis:

Stal nochami propadat' Fedor Volkov. A nochi - strashnye, zriachie: pomer chelovek - a glaza otkryty, gliadiat i vse vidiat, chego zhivym videt' nelet' (281).

This identifies the eye again with the sun and the white nights, and is echoed one more time in a passage shortly afterwards which describes the nights which Fedor Volkov spends sleeping out in the woods. These blank, unsleeping eyes, however, are the eyes of the dead, which see things 'ordinary human beings are forbidden'. Intriguingly, this phrase is picked up again in conjunction with the sad eyes of Captain Indrik, each time with increasing emphasis:

Vse na svete Indrik vidal; dolzhno byt', i to vidal, chego zhivym videt' nelet' (285).

And again a few paragraphs later:

- Nu, Fedor, tebe by eshche odnogo tak-to, a tam i v Afriku s Bogom, - govoril veselo Indrik, a glaza grustnye byli, budto vidali odnazhdy, chego zhivym videt' nelet': pravdu (286).

Indrik, it seems, has travelled beyond the grave and lived to tell the tale, rather in the style of another character from Zamiatin's fiction, Marei, in the story Sever, who survives a folk 'drowning'
at the hands of *rusalki* as a young child and is thus reputed by a local hermit to have seen 'heaven' (*tot svet*).\(^{64}\) Indrik's eyes, however, repeatedly described as 'sad' (*grustnye*) and linked with the sea symbolically in terms of their blue colour, tell a more disquieting story. He seems to hover, ghost-like, between an assertion of inevitable mortality and the possibility of resurrection and renewal. His remarks about Africa, which he makes sound distant, exotic and paradisaical, reflect perfectly this ambiguity. He describes the elephants which carry their riders off into the 'unknown' (285), words which are echoed later when his schooner moves slowly northward with Volkov on board.\(^{65}\) Indrik's tales about elephants suggestively complete a circle of associations in Volkov's mind, beginning with a hazy childhood memory of the stories he used to tell his father, one of which describes an elephant running along and 'playing silver a trumpet';\(^{66}\) moreover, he hints at the chance of immortality by referring to the flowers in Africa in terms of their powerful fragrance and as a guarantee of everlasting life: 'Raz niukhnut' - i ne otorvesh 'sia: potuda niukhat' budesh', pokuda ne pomresh'...' (285). This becomes almost a semi-mocking refrain in the text, yet one which suggests that dream-visions and the striving after them - the striking fragrance of the flowers ('vot dukh kakoi...' [285]) recalling the fragrance of the young girl's hand and bosom during Volkov's initial dream ('tot samyi, tot samyi dukh...' [279]) - is the quest for immortality. At the same time, we are reminded continually of the fate of Volkov's father. This is a character who functions very much as a model for his son, since he also once worked as a harpoonist on Indrik's schooner, listened willing to the sea-captain's stories, drank heavily and 'swam (....) wherever
he found himself' (282), and yet is now dead. The fact that Volkov's father is deceased is a constant reminder of the fragility and precariousness of human existence.

In this context it is intriguing to note the etymological derivation of the word *indrik*, which refers to an animal intimately linked in Russian religious myth to the land of the dead. According to the *Golubinaia kniga* ('The Book of Profundity'), a Flagellant spiritual song cycle about the beginning of the world which was first recorded in the 1860s, the 'indrik' is a huge beast which lives beneath Mount Zion and moves under the earth as the sun moves below the horizon at night. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, this animal has been interpreted in some quarters as a mysterious, dark and chthonic force. In his work on Slavic mythology, Afanas'ev offered various interpretations of this image and linked the animal with ancient demons and serpents. He was followed faithfully in this theory by Remizov, and most recently by the Dutch scholar Joost van Baak, whose theory that Captain Indrik is 'basically connected with the underworld and the realm of the dead' derives ultimately from Afanas'ev via the modern scholar, Toporov. There is a problem with this theory, however. As Afanas'ev admits, the wandering minstrels who performed these songs identified the *indrik* with the unicorn (*inorog* or *edinorog*), and it hardly needs pointing out that this animal functioned in Christian myth as a symbol of Christ (in Russia, as elsewhere, its horn was believed to possess miraculous healing and curative powers). The lines in the song which describe the beast living under Mount Zion would seem to suggest divine, rather than demonic origin; furthermore, it is associated in the
song with a number of animals and places which are sacred in the context of Christian religion, either because they feature in the life of Christ (such as the River Jordan, where he was baptised), or because they are linked with Old Testament myths about Creation (such as the whale). The animal is not actually afraid of the sun, as van Baak claims, but only akin to the sun in the way it moves under the earth during the night. Most importantly, the text describes the animal as the source of all the world's water, and therefore of all earthly sustenance; indeed, all versions of the Golubinaia kniga, including those cited by Afanas'ev, stress repeatedly its nourishing and purifying powers.\textsuperscript{72}

Despite the confusion surrounding the symbolic significance of this animal, it would seem entirely justified to attribute a mythic function to Indrik on the basis of his name and his inspirational importance to Volkov as guide and pathfinder. Zamiatin's probable knowledge of sectarian spiritual songs from the North (he mentions them in connection with Kliuev's poetry in 'Oiazyke'),\textsuperscript{73} and his general habit of exploiting names for their punning and allusive potential - see, for example, the merchant, Kortoma, in Sever\textsuperscript{74} - make it impossible that Indrik's name was chosen haphazardly. One argument in favour of identifying Captain Indrik with the mythical unicorn is the tradition which traces the animal's origins both to Africa and India, continents with which Zamiatin's sea-captain is associated in the story.\textsuperscript{75} Another is the subtle, semantic association which links the location in which Indrik hires his sailors - Sviatoi Nos - with the very horn of the unicorn itself (nos here functioning as a Northern dialect term for 'horn').\textsuperscript{76} Twice, it should be noted, the
word nos is used in connection with the 'prow' of Indrik's schooner, the place where Fedor Volkov finally dies. Furthermore, it is perhaps worth pointing out that the word edinorog also applies to a species of whale sometimes called the 'unicorn-whale', but better known to cetologists as the Nostril-Whale or Narwhale on account of its peculiar horn (which was mistaken in antiquity for a peaked nose and also believed to possess miraculous, life-giving properties). Like the indrik in the spiritual song, Indrik is profoundly linked to the element of water: he is renowned for his travels overseas, tells stories about the Indian Ocean, and his eyes are the same colour as the sea; in addition, via the images of open eyes, he is equated symbolically with the very sun itself, even to the point where its dipping below the horizon at night and 'swimming' through the sea in chapter one is imagistically analogous to the journey his schooner makes in the last chapter. Indrik's reputed possession of knowledge generally, a fact stressed on several occasions during the course of the narrative ('Vse na svete Indrik vidai' etc.), allies him potentially with a song cycle purporting 'wisdom' and 'profundity' about the origins of the universe.

In view of the confusion surrounding the unicorn in the Russian sectarian imagination - in Christian myth the edinorog is a symbol of meekness, purity and innocence, whereas in seventeenth century Russian alphabet books it is occasionally depicted as a terrifying beast - it is probably advisable to focus on the motif common to all accounts, namely, the miraculously curative properties of its horn. In many ways, Captain Indrik does fulfil a restorative function in Volkov's life: he confirms the
existence of Africa, provides him with the possibility of passage, and keeps him entertained *en route* with various tales about exotic places. We note that Volkov's first encounter with Indrik is accompanied by a sudden surge of strength and spontaneous outburst of joy: 'Krepilsia Fedor Volkov - krepilsia, da vdrug s radosti zagogochet leshim: gy-gy-gy-gy-y-y!' (284); we recall, also, that Indrik is associated symbolically with the tropical flowers, the unforgettable fragrance of which is said to guarantee immortality. The theme of resurrection and revitalization is never far from the surface in this part of the narrative. We are told that Volkov is so exultant when Indrik confirms the existence of Africa that he wants to kiss him three times on the cheeks, a ritual act expressing joy which was traditionally performed at Easter. The verb used here, *khristosovat’sia* (284), derives from the Russian word for 'Christ' (*khristos*), and it is symptomatic that Volkov's discovery should coincide with a festival celebrating Christ's death and subsequent resurrection. The idea of the *Golubinaia kniga* - that the *indrik* is the source of all water, and thus of all nourishment - dovetails neatly with the theme of spiritual sustenance which underpins the Feast of Prepolovenie; moreover, Volkov's growing frustration as Indrik's schooner moves further northwards is expressed by a dream in which drinking, again, plays a vital role. This permits a reading of Volkov's search for Africa in terms of Christ's teaching. Volkov, a simple, gentle and meek fisherman whose humble profession recalls that of several of Christ's apostles, and whose eyes light up 'like candles dedicated to God' after he has succeeded in harpooning the first whale, comes to believe in Africa ('i poveril v Afriku Fedor Volkov' [279]) much as an agnostic or atheist.
comes to accept religious faith. And it is the confirmation, or denial, of the promise which this sacred object holds for him which is the subject of the tale.

In his study of Zamiatin, Alex Shane suggests that the message of Afrika is that 'men should die striving for their goals, rather than live to discover them to be false illusions.' Approach from the folk-religious perspective, however, this message acquires layers of subtle ambiguities and paradoxes. The author-narrator's final remark - 'Est Afrika. Fedor Volkov doekhal' (287) - is plainly ironic and implies that Africa is more of a symbol than an actual physical entity because, geographically speaking, Volkov does not arrive in Africa and therefore cannot be said to have reached his destination in physical terms. On the other hand, because he dies believing that his passage there has been financially secured (the second harpoon strikes its target just at the moment of his collapse and is only harmlessly dislodged a few seconds later) he thus 'arrives' in symbolic terms. Yet what exactly does Africa symbolize? If it is a promise, a dream, an opportunity to live anew and a vision of paradise, then it is an illusion and a false, mendacious lie perpetrated on the innocent by those possessing the truth. It is supremely ironic, for example, that it is the thought of Africa and the attendant excitement which it generates which actually causes Volkov's death. The final section, with its sapping of confidence in the revelatory power of dream-reality and the imagistic echo which links the action of inhaling immortal fragrances with Volkov's actual collapse, anticipates the revelation of a dark and ominous secret about existence: human beings are mortal and their dreams, which
possess a crucial, mobilizing force, are nevertheless not to be depended on. From the folk perspective, Volkov's encounter with a mermaid marks his tragic destiny as a man permitted a glimpse of paradise for which he will later pay a heavy price, while from a religious perspective his glimpse of a transcendent reality teases him with the prospect of eternal salvation and an everlasting life which does not exist. In both cases, the illusion which Volkov takes to his grave resides in the naive hope that the original vision can be recaptured and reexperienced - in the words of a popular rhyme which Jakobson cites as a typical example of the Russian fairy-tale's ethos: 'Ne to chudo iz chudes,/Chto muzhik upal s nebes,/A to chudo iz chudes,/Kak tuda on vlez.'

Afrika is one of the most concise expressions of Zamiatin's Weltanschauung. His view of life as a ceaseless, tragic struggle for the attainment of ideals is a fundamental paradigm in his fiction, especially in those tales set in the Russian North. This trilogy is teeming with dreamers whose grandiose schemes for improvement - whether for their own personal benefit or for the benefit of the community at large - remain comically unfeasible. In Sever, Marei's quest to bring illumination - and thus, symbolically, enlightenment - to his sub-Arctic village by way of constructing a street-light ultimately ends in failure (Marei's initial vision and 'resurrection', like Volkov's, is triggered by an encounter with water-spirits). In the same vein, Tsybin's life-long ambition in Ela (1928) to secure a new 'bride' in the shape of a Norwegian sloop is cruelly scuppered when a vicious storm prevents him from reaching the safe haven of his coastal village.
These characters, all of them fishermen, are obsessive fantasists whose penchant for solitary contemplation in the embrace of nature betrays certain similarities with the German Romantic tendency of waldeinsamkeit. Like those of Sologub, Zamiatin's fictional heroes die with their goals unrealized. Yet it is axiomatic in his fiction that none of the struggles of his protagonists are futile: the very impulse 'to live anew' guarantees a meaningful life in spiritual terms. If Afrika is a tale about Russia's backwardness, about the inescapable urge to escape the tedium of its isolated provinces and the attractive, albeit illusory exoticism of foreign countries, then, paradoxically, it is also a poetic affirmation of inner spiritual vitality, an affirmation communicated with tremendous force through the lyrical explorations of the Northern landscape, the poetic stylization of regional dialect and the self-evident fascination with its anachronistic customs and superstitions.

1'Belaia liubov' is the title of a speech given by Zamiatin on 11 February 1924. It was first published in Sovremennia literatura, Leningrad, 1925, pp. 76-81, and later in Litsa, New York, 1967, pp. 20-38, under the title 'Fedor Sologub'. A draft version, entitled 'Morbus rossica', dated January 1923, is held in IMLI, fond 47, opis' 2, ed. khr. 188. See 'Fedor Sologub' (IV, 150-55).

2Afrika was first published in the almanac Severnye zapiski, 4/5, 1916 - see Strizhev, 'Vozvrashchenie Evgeniia Zamiatina', op. cit., p. 54. There are no drafts in the Zamiatin archive in IMLI, therefore more precise dating of the story is impossible at present. All subsequent references, unless otherwise indicated, are to the version published in the Neimanis edition (I, 277-87).

3'(....) i D ultsinea - prekrasnaia i nezhnaia, eto vozdukh, mechta, kotoroi Sologub zhivet i kotoroi net na zemle. Stikhi Aleksandra Bloka - tselye toma ego stikhov - ob odkom: o Neznakomke, o


5V 1915 godu ia byl na severe - v Kemi, v Solovkakh, v Soroke.' See 'Zakuhsy' (IV, 301).

6Zamiatin mentioned the Oloents and Arkhangel’sk regions in particular. See ‘O iazyke’, op. cit., p. 83. According to one recent estimate, roughly half the population in these areas at the turn of the century was made up of schismatics - see T. Bernshtam, Russkaia narodnaia kul’tura pomor’ia v XIX - nachale XX v. , Leningrad, 1983, pp. 90-99 [p. 95]. The pomor as authentic Russian representative is mentioned by V. A. Keldysh in his introduction to a recent selection of Zamiatin’s prose: ‘I znamenatel’no, chto rasskaz (Afrika - PC) sviazan s temoi russkogo Severa i chto geroi ego - iskonnuyi severnyi zhitel’, pomor. Ne vpervei nashi khudozhniki slova - napomnim eshche raz o Prishvine - iskali zdes’ tsel’nuiu narodnuiu dushu.' See


8See N. Leskov, 'Predstavleniia koreliakov o nechistoi sile' and 'Otchet o poezdke k olonetskim karelam letom 1893' published respectively in the third issue of *Zhivaia starina* for 1893 and the first issue for 1894.

9See A. Grigor'ev (compl. and ed.), *Arkhangelskie byliny i istoricheskie pesni*, vol. 1, Moscow, 1904.

Bilibin had travelled to the provinces of Vologda, Olonetsk and Arkhangel'sk under the auspices of the ethnographic division of the Russian Museum. His subsequent article, 'Narodnoe tvorchestvo Russkogo Severa', appeared in *Mir iskusstva*, 1904, 11, and the postcard designs were issued by the St. Eugenie Red Cross Society in 1905 (although Bilibin had painted them in 1904). There were ten postcards in all, three of which were modelled on scenes from the Kem' area: number one, depicting a river in the Kem' region; number five, depicting a small market-town (Poduzhe'me), also in the Kem' area; and number ten, which showed a small cemetery in Kem' itself. See the illustrations in S. Golynets (ed.), Ivan Iakovlevich Bilibin. *Stat'i. Pis'ma. Vospominaniia o khudozhnikhe*, Leningrad, 1970.


12See V. Lazarev's introduction to 'Vozvrashchenie Evgeniia Zamiatina', op. cit., p. 53. He is referring to the publication of Naklichkah in the third issue of Zavety for 1914, for which the journal was subsequently impounded. The evidence for his speculation is not given; however, a similar claim has been made by Oleg Mikhailov in his brief introduction to the recent
publication of Zamiatin's 'blocknotes': '[Zamiatin - PC] был сослан
царским правителем за повестю "На куличках" в Кем (....).'

Zamiatin mentions Kluev's poetry in the lecture 'O iazyke': 'Из
поэтов - удивительный znatok i master iazyka - Nikolai Kluev; u
neggo - krepkii, vernyi severnyi iazyk, severnorusskii fol`klor - i
odnovremenno pol`zovanie staroobriadcheskimi, sektantskimi
dukhovnymi stikhami.' See 'O iazyke', op. cit., p. 84.

See 'ZakuUsy' (IV, 303).

'Strana bez imeni, bez territorii! Vot kuda my khoteli togda
ubezhatь - malen`kie dikari. I po neznaniu my nazyvali ee to
Aziei, to Afriki, to Amerikoi. No v nei ne bylo granits; ona
nachinalasь ot togo lesa, kotoryi vidnellsia iz okna klassnoi
komnaty.' See Prishvin, op. cit., p. 244.

Maksimov, op. cit., pp. 143-44. The karbas, a local dialect term
which reverses the more common barkas, used to be
manufactured along the rivers flowing into the White Sea in the
area of the Arkhangel`sk delta. See Entsiklopedicheskii slovarь,
op. cit., vol. XIV, 1895, p. 472.

These picture elements in Prishvin's Za volshebnym kolobkom
occur as follows: ducks (p. 176), the North-Eastern wind (p. 206),
salmon-fishing (p. 191), jellyfish (p. 208) and the samoedy (p.
218). Compare also Prishvin's description of the local populace -
'Narod nash tikhii, smirennyi: ni v nem zlosti, ni v nem obidy.
Narod, chto tiulenь' (p. 175) - with Zamiatin's description of Fedor
Volkov's eyes: 'Glianet Fedor glazami svoimi nerpiach`mi, neobidnymi (....)' (281).

Oni (the white nights - PC) bezgreshnye, bestelesnye, oni
pripodniatyi nad zemlei, oni - grezy v nezdesnom mire. Etoi
izbushki v lesu vovse i ne bylo, nikto ne rasskazyval skazki, a
prosto tak pomereshchilosь (....)'. See Prishvin, op. cit., p. 179.

Compare the opening words of Afrika - 'Kak vsegda, na
vzmorьe - k parokhodu - s berega побежали karbasa. Chego-
nibudь da privez parokhod: muchitsy, solьtsy, sakharku' (277) -
with Prishvin's: 'Vremena khudye, semgi vse menь she, a podmogi
vse bolь she' (p. 179).
See ibid., p. 194.

1'(...)
ne dikovina v teh mestakh, sredi staroverov, vstrechat' nachetchikov' - see Maksimov, God na Severe, op. cit., p. 87. He draws special attention to the predominance of Old Believers in the town of Soroka and the surrounding villages: 'Zhiteli posada Symy tverdo stoiat v pravoslavii, nesmotria na to, chto blizhniaia Soroka i vse derevni po Korel' skomy beregu pochti vse i davno uzhe derzhatstia raskola.' See ibid., p. 191.

According to Dal', this adjective derives from the noun dvoedanets, meaning: 'someone who pays two tributes'. Its special application to Old Believers originated in Siberia, where it referred to schismatics forced to pay a dual tribute to the authorities and the Orthodox Church from 1782 onwards. The verb dvoedanit' thus came to mean: 'secretly to support the schism'. See Dal', I, p. 419. In 'O iazyke', the House of Arts lecture on language, Zamiatin offered the expression nachetchik dvoedanskii as an illustration of his technique of helping metropolitan readers comprehend words of obscure origin: '(...) davaia chitateliu slovo sovershennno novoe i neznakomoe, nado prepodnosit' ego v takom vide, chtoby chitateliu bylo poniatno, esli ne tochnoe znachenie ego, to, vo vsiakom sluchae - smysl (....). Esli ia govoriu "dvoedinskogo nachetchika plemiasch" - slovo "nachetchika" totchas zhe assotsiiiruetia s staroobriadtsami.' See 'O iazyke', op. cit., p. 84. Nota bene: the typographical error in the spelling of dvoedanskii here is probably due to a mistaken transcription of the original lecture notes by Zamiatin's wife, Liudmila Nikolaevna, after her husband's death. See Strizhev, 'Literaturnaia studiia Zamiatina', op. cit., p. 119.

Bernshtam characterizes the Old Believers in terms of the following traits: 'khoziaistvennost', chistota, opriatnost', chestnost', otsutstvie p'ianstva, gramotnost' zhenshchin i detei.' See Bernshtam, op. cit., p. 97.

See Gromyko, Traditsionnye normy povedeniia, op. cit., p. 123.

This was particularly true of the Old Believer sect known as the Pomorskoe soglasie, which came into existence along the White Sea coast very soon after the Nikon reforms of the seventeenth century and was still strong at the turn of the
According to Zabylin, the removal of a husband's shoes was one of the most ancient customs practised by the Russians, and served to symbolize the husband's expectation of submissiveness, servility and humility on the part of his wife. See Zabylin, op. cit., p. 177. Volkov, however, is embarrassed by this ritual and interrupts it: 'Nagnulas' lausta, gor'kaia, rusal'naia, pokorno sapog razobula Fedoru Volkovu. Tak pokorno, chto drugogo ne dal ei sniat' Fedor - (.....)' (280).

After the 1861 Act of Emancipation, the married couple, or *tiaglo*, became the primary labour unit within the commune. The term *boby*l' came to refer to an unmarried man who, because of the particular laws dictating the organisation of the typical peasant commune at that time, was unable to claim an allotment of land for himself. See Worobec, 'New Players, Old Games', op. cit., p. 119.

Zamiatin may have picked up this specialist terminology from Mikhail Prishvin. A professional agronomist before turning to writing, Prishvin devoted a considerable amount of time and space to the problem of farming in the North, especially in the literary *ocherk* entitled *V kraiu nepuganykh ptits* (1907), which he wrote shortly after an earlier trip to the Onega region. See M. Prishvin, *Sobranie sochinenii*, op. cit., vol. 2, pp. 1-163. He records, for example, that the harsh climate and the stony terrain made farming extremely difficult. A local peasant explains to him: 'My ne pashem, a pereshevelivaem kamen' (.....) takuiu zemliu za leto nepremenno nuzhno pereshevelit' raz piat', inache nichego ne roditsia' (p. 83). Prishvin describes later how the land is scorched in preparation for the next year's planting (the black ash which remains is described as a *pal* [p. 85]). He continues: ' Veter mozhet raznesti s kholmika dragotsennuiu chernuiu zolu, i vsia rabota propadet darom. Potomu-to nuzhno seichas zhe priniat' sia za novuiu raboty. Esli kamnei malo, to mozhno priamo orat' osoboi palovoi sokhoi, s priamymi soshnikami bez prisokha. Esli zhe ikh mnogo, zemliu nuzhno kosorovat', razdelyvat' ruchnym kosym kriukom, starinnoi koporiugoi. Kogda i eta
tiazhelaia rabota okonchena, to pashnia gotova, i sleduiushchrei
vesnoi mozhno seiat' iachmen' ili repu' (p. 86). All emphases are
in the original.

29 "Afrikanskii brat" was first published in Krasnaianov', 1922, 5,
pp. 94-102, but is allegedly taken from the fifth chapter of an
unfinished novel, Oglashennye, which Forsh was writing between
1915-16. Ostensibly, it tells the story of a group of sectarians in
St. Petersburg, officially banned in 1894, who play host to
German missionaries from Africa. Two of the story's protagonists
resolve to accept their offer of a free trip to the continent in
exchange for joining their ranks. In their general ignorance about
Africa itself, and their naive belief in a better world elsewhere,
there is more than a strong echo of Zamiatin's tale: 'Gde byla
Afrika, znali ne vse, no vse, detski veruia, vdrug poniali, chto
imerno tam, v etoi Afrike, budet osobennaya, znachitel'naia
zhizn', a oni takie zdes' bednye, serye liudi, tam, u chernykh,
budut pervymi nuzhnymi liud' mi.' See O. Forsh, Sobranie
sochinenii, eight volumes, Moscow-Leningrad, 1960-64, vol. 6,
1964, pp. 243-57 [p. 256].

30 Ibid.

31 '(....) da pered samym nosom u Pimena - khop! - zubami kak
shchelknet. I esheche by vot stol'ko - zatsepl by Pimenov nos'
(282).

32 "Za zhar-pitsei" was first published in Russkaia mys', 1910, 2,
pp. 95-105. See Forsh, Sobranie sochinenii, op. cit., vol. 6, pp. 48-
63.

33 Ibid., p. 58.
34 Ibid., p. 55.

35 See the entry under lápti in Slovar' russkogo iazyka, op. cit.,

36 'Krichashchee nesootvetstvie mezhdu stikhioinoi tiagoi k
prekrasnomu, zalozhennoi v dushakh geroev, i temnotoiu,
melochnoi rachet'livost'iu, vlast'iu inushchestvennykh interesov
privodit k tragicheskomu vzryvu strasti, k prestupliiu i gibeli
prostykh derevenskikh liudei (....).' See A. Tamarenko, 'Rasskazy,
613].
The first mention of the young girl's fragrance is given during the dream sequence: 'A ruki u nei, i grud' u nei - tak pakhnuli -

ol'ko vo sne tak i mozhet pritsnit'sia' (278). This is followed later by: 'Nagnulsia v nizkom poklone Fedor Volkov i pokazalos': ot

ruki - tot samyi, tot samyi dukh, kotoryi vo sne....' (279). As Dal' indicates (I, p. 503), the word dukh means both 'spirit' and

'fragrance', and I would suggest that the potential ambiguity of this word is far from coincidental.

The etymology of prepolovenie derives from polovina, meaning 'half' - see Polnyi pravoslavnyi slovar', op. cit., vol. 2, column 1901.

The Feast of Prepolovenie coincides with the Jewish Feast of the Tabernacle and celebrates Jesus' words to the Pharisees as recorded in the Gospel according to St. John: 'If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth in me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water' (chapter 7, verses 37-38). Biblical scholars have interpreted this as an allusion to the words of the prophet Isaiah, chapter 12, verses 2-3: 'Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and song; and he is become my salvation. Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.' See Entsiklopedicheskii slovar', op. cit., vol. XXV, 1898, p. 69.

<<Odin raz gnalis za Bogoroditsei razboiniki, a Ona byla s

Mladentsem na rukakh. Bezhala, bezhala Bogoroditsa, gliad' -

reka. Ona i brosilas' v vodu, raschityvaia, pereplyt' na druguiu

storonu i spastis' ot pogoni. No s Mladentsem na rukakh plyt'

bylo trudno, potomu chto gresti prikhodilos' odnoi rukoi. Vot i

vzmolilas' Bogoroditsa Svoemu Mladentsu: "Syn moi milyi, dai ty

mne tret'iu ruku, a to plyt' mne ne v mogoty". Mladenets uslyshal

molitvu materi, i poiavilas' u nee tret'ia ruka. Togda uzh plyt'

bylo legko, i Bogoroditsa blagopoluchno dostigla

protivopolozhnogo berega>>. Etim legendarnym skazaniem vpolne

ob'iasniaetsia, pochemu krest'iane vsekh velikorusskih gubernii

prazdnik Prepolovenie nazyvaiut "Preplavleniem" (ot slova

pereplyt')' See Maksimov, Krestnaia sila', op. cit., p. 435. Dal' (III,

p. 395) also notes this mistaken association with regard to the
verb *pereplavliat'* , citing the popular belief that: 'V Prepolovenie Bogoroditsa Volgu perepelyla.'

41Pokoiny FedExora Volkova otets kitoboem *plaval* i byl zapivokha prestrashnyi: mesiatsta pil. V p'yanom vide byla u nego povadka takaia: *plavat* . V luzhu, v protalinu, v snegi - ukhnet, kuda popalo, i nu - rukami, nogami boltat', budto *plavaet* '(282); and later, more explicitly: 'V tom sugrobe tseluiu noch' i *proplaval* ' (282). These echoes are heard again in chapter four with the verb *plyt* : 'Navedomo kuda *plyvut* skvoz' tuman' (285); and 'I v mezheni beloi opiat' *plyli*, navedomo gde, *plyli* nedeliu, a mozhet - i dve......' (286). All these examples hark back to the initial image of the never-setting sun in the first chapter; 'Noch' svetlaia, maiskaia. Po-nastoiashchemu ne sadilos' solntse, a tak tol'ko prinagnetsia, po moriu *poplyvet* .....' (278). There is also the concealed joke that whereas Jesus in his speech to the Pharisees refers to the 'drinking' of water ('If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink'), Volkov and his father are 'drinkers' (zapivokhi ) of somewhat sterner stuff. All emphases are my own.

42'Tol'ko k vesne na nogi vstal, da i to s serdtsem nedelka kakaia-to ostalas': inoi raz podkatitsia pod serdtse - tol'ko ishchet Fedor za chto by rukoi ukhvatit' sia' (283).

43Zamiatin's symbolic switch from river bank to coastal shore is made possible by the flexibility of the word *bereg* in Russian. Indrik's schooner sets sail from the Murmansk Shore, known in Russian as the 'Murmanskii bereg'; moreover, the word for 'shore' as it applies to areas bordering the White Sea is also *bereg* in Russian i.e. 'Pomorskii bereg', 'Onezhskii bereg', 'Letnii bereg', etc. Zamiatin mentions the word *bereg* frequently in his story and it lends weight to the idea that Volkov exists on the edge of the world and that his journey is a liminal one. It is implied in the sentence: 'A cherez dve nedeli - na Murmanskom bezhal...' (284); and occurs in the very first line of the story: 'Kak vsegda, na vzmor'e - k parokhodu - s berega pobezhali karbasa' (277). It is worth noting also Zamiatin's frequent use of the verb *bezhat* in the story, which echoes the line 'bezhala, bezhala bogoroditsa' in the apocryphal tale as recounted by Maksimov.
It was believed that these souls usually belonged to unbaptized children who had died tragically, or to young girls who had drowned or committed suicide. See Ivanits, op. cit., p. 78.

"Kazhiduiu noch' Fedor Volkov uteshal gor'kuiu, s zelenymi volosami rusal'imi, laustu' (280); and later: 'nagnulas' lausta, gor'kaia, rusal'naia,...' (280). My emphases.

"Noch'iu, pri lune, kotoraiia dla nikh iarche obychnogo svetit, oni kachaiutsia na vetviakh, aukaiutsia mezhdu soboiu i vodiat veselye khorovody s pesniami, igrami i pliaskami.' See Maksimov, Nechistaia, nevedomaia sila, op. cit., p. 102. Compare with Zamiati: 'Kazhiduiu noch' mesiats vesennii stanovilsia vse ton'she: ukhodila vesna, devushka zastenchivaia; aukalo za lesom leto, s nochami golymi, belymi, s besstydnym solntsem nochnym' (280). Both emphases are my own.

Both encounters take place on a spring night outside Pimen's cabin, with the same emphasis on surreal sleight-of-hand: 'Kak togda - vo sne ili naiavu - opiat' stoial Fedor Volkov u okna dvoodanskoi, uteshal gor'kuiu devushku' (279).

The girl's association with the colour white is ubiquitous throughout the dream sequence, but the very first mention of this colour occurs in connection with the crests of waves mentioned in the very first lines: 'Na more begali beliaki, karbasa khodili vniz-vverkh' (277). My emphasis.

'I divno bylo: devushka, budto, veselaia, a etak poet? Vek by ee slushal (....)' (278).

'Penie rusalok nekotorye iz nashikh istochnikov nazyvaiut ocharovatel'nym i dazhe pripisyvaiut emu chudesnuiu sposobnost'; uslyshavshii eto penie nepremennno podoidet k pevitsam; po drugomu soobshcheniiu, kogda poiut rusalki, to dazhe more perestaet volnovat'sia, a chelovek mozhet zaslushat' sia na vek ' (my emphasis). See D. Zelenin, Ocherki russkoi mifologii, op. cit., pp. 168-69.

'Noch' svetlaia, maiskaia. Po-nastoiashchemu ne sadilos' solntse, a tak tol'ko prinagnetsia, po moriu poplyvet - i vse more raspishet zolotymi vykruzhkami, alymi zakomarinami, lazorevymi liasami' (278). According to Dal' (II, p. 287) the noun
liasy means 'jokes', 'teasing witticisms', and 'deceitful and cunning language'.

52 For Russian equivalents of bezoblyzhnyi, Dal’ (I, 67) gives nelozhnyi, pravdivyi, vernyi, istinnyi.

53 See A:1931, op. cit., p. 13. The catalogue of Zamiatin's archive in IMLI shows also that Zamiatin received a letter from Dmitrii Mitrokhin, the artist responsible for the cover, on 25 February 1916, just prior to the book's publication. See IMLI, fond 47, opis' 3, ed. khr. 142.

54 Gaetan, one of the main characters in the play, claims to have been brought up as a child by a sea-fairy. In Act II, Scene 2, he alleges that the sound of the breaking waves is the evil Morgana combing her pale, golden locks: 'Za to zhe sviatoi Gvennole/Prevratil ee v feiu morskuui.../I, kogda shumit okean,/
Vlazhnym grebnem cheshet zlaia Morgana/ Zoloto blednykh kudrei./Ona poet, no golos ee /Pechalen, kak plesk volny....' Morgana is a sea-enchantress from Celtic myth and legend. See A. Blok, Roza i Krest, in his Sobranie sochinenii, op. cit., vol. 3, 1981, p. 177.


56 The possibility that the steamer on which the travellers arrive - in Russian, parokhod - could be an allusion to the title of the Old Testament legend - perekhod - is perhaps straining interpretational ingenuity a little too far. It should be pointed out, nonetheless, that Indrik mentions this word specifically in
connection with travelling to Africa: 'Deneg vot nado priadochno - tyshcha, a to i vse poltory. Na parokhode-to doekhat' do Afriki... - gliadel Indrik ser' ezno (...)' (284).

57'"faraonakh" ili "faraonove voiske" znaiut i velikorussyy, no otlichaiut ikh ot rusalok. V Vladimirskoi gubernii rasskazyvalut, chto v Chermnom more i ponyn' eshche plavaet faraonoovo voisko, prichem zhenschhiny "kak est' eshche nastoiashchie: s volosami i s tit'kami, tol'ko plesk (khvost) u nikh rybii - nogi roslis', a muzhiki vse dazhe s borodami." Takie izobrazheniia faraonov krest'iane v starinu chasto vyrezyvali na "per'iakh" (doskakh), ukrashavshikh krovli domov (....).' See Zelenin, op. cit., p. 198.

58'Vera v sushchestvovanie sverkh'"estestvennykh sushchestv prirodnogo proiskhozhdeniia (....) byla svoistvenna vsem zhiteliam belomorskogo poberezh'ia.' See Bernshtam, op. cit., p. 175. Later, she continues: 'Vse arkhaicheskie motivy i obrazy, sviazzanye s vodoi, okazavshis' zdes' kak nei' zia bolee na meste, utrachennye v iuzhnykh i tsentral'nykh russkikh raionakh, vosstanovilis' ili preobrazovalis' v morskie.' See ibid., p. 212.

59'Sredi pomorov sushchestvovalo predanie o tom, chto morskie zveri proiskhodiat ot "faraonova voiska", pogibshego v more (....). Morskie zveri, po mneniu pomorov, obladaut chuvstvom kollektivizma, sobstvennym iazykom i vpolne vladeiut priemami soprotivleniia cheloveku.' See ibid., p. 174.

60'Cherepanova remarks that the North was the most active zone in Russia as far as the words faraon and faraonka were concerned; also, it is worth noting that some of the mermaid fabulates cited by her show evidence of contamination from the rusalka myth. See Cherepanova, op. cit., p. 96.

61'Po nocham vozle shkuny neslis' stai meduz: udaritsia kotoraya v bort - i zasetit, i pobezhit dal'she tsvetkom zelenoserebrianym. Tol'ko by nagnut' sia - ne tot li samyi? - a ona uzh potuhla, netu: prisnilas' .....' (286).

62'I'det mimo il' dinogo kamnia, a na kamne belaia gaga spit - ne shelokhnetsia, spit - a glaza otkryty, i vse, beloe, spit s glazami otkrytymi: ulitsa izb iavstvennykh glazu do suchka poslednego; voda v leshchinkakh mezh kamnei; na kamne - belaia gaga. I
strashno stupit' pogromche: snimetsia belaia gaga, sov'etsia - uletit belaia noch', umolknut devushka pet'' (278).

63'Tak, poka ne prishla liutaia osen', v lesakh i korotal nochi, so svoimi snami s glaz na glaz' (281). My emphasis.

64'Byl, mat', tvoi mladenets na tom svete, a vot otchali - i pozabyl, vspomnit' by - a ne mozhet. Nichego-o, vspomnit!' See Sever (I, 401).

65'Nevedomo kuda plyvut skvoz' tuman' (285)

66'Vse pozabyl - vot odno Fedoru po siu poru zapomnilos': bezhit, budto, slon - i v trubu trubit serebrianiu, a uzh chto eto za truba takaia - Bog vest'' (283-84).


69'Remizov's note explains the reference to the animal (called a vyndrik ) in the short story Boroda , which belongs to the Leto krasnoe section of Posolon'. See A. Remizov, Sochinenia , op. cit., vol. 6, pp. 55 & 254.

Молниеносный рог, которым наделяют народные предания мифического царя-змея, дал повод песенам о голубиной книге подставлять неопознанное для них название Инд-рик созвучным словом един-рог. В XVII веке рог единогорга считался обладающим силой исцелять тяжкие недуги и поддерживать цветущее здоровье в продолжении всей жизни. 'См. Афанасьев, оп. цит., т. 2, с. 556.

Ibid., с. 553.

О иazyke', оп. цит., с. 84.

Имя Кортома, которое принадлежит купцу, убеждённому в западном методе ведения бизнеса, возможно, происходит от слова kortom, означающего 'покой', 'долг', или 'быстрый продажа'. См. Дал', II, с. 170.

См. Mifologicheskii slovar', оп. цит., с. 204.

В нордском диалекте, Святой Нос значит 'Священная Рог'. Слово nos в этом контексте равно русскому термину mys, который относится к башне или остроконечной и виде рога, острым выступающим в море, реку или озеро; тем не менее, это также синоним для русского слова rog (рог), архаичное слово, используемое в том же смысле, чтобы означать подобное место, как иллюстрировано Larskii Rog, на севере Архангельск, и Оленной Rog, который лежит на южном берегу Кольского полуострова. См. соответствующие статьи 'nos и rog в Slovar' русскogo iazyka, оп. цит., т. 2, 1983, с. 509 & т. 3, 1983, с. 721. Существенно, это на схожем типе 'башни', зелёной и водой заливом, выступающими участками земли, описанными в истории как 'Мышь-волнок' (281), что Volkov искал ночное укрытие и ждал возвращения своих гостей.

Этот термин упомянут дважды в рассказе, однажды как только Volkov упалил: 'Два дня стоял на носу Fedor Volkov, у пушки' (287); и позже, когда он обессилел: '(...). - безяли, сломил голову, на нос, где воле пушки лежал Fedor Volkov' (287). Оба акценты - моя собственная.

См. обсуждение носа в 'Cetology' главе в классическом романе Хермана Мелвилла 'Moby Dick' (1851). См. H. Melville, Moby Dick, reprinted edition, notes and

79'Po-nastoiaashchemu ne sadilos' solntse, a tak tol'ko prinagnetsia, po moriu poplyvet....' (278).

80'Mifologicheskii slovar', op. cit., p. 204.

81'See Kalinskii, op. cit., pp. 179-85 [pp. 180-81].

82'Tot samyi ded Dem'ian, kakoi v sukonnoi karpetke butylku rom a ziat' iu v podarok vez. Da v puti razdavil i tri dnia prososal karpetku romovuiu. Vot, budto, k karpetke k etoi i prinik Fedor Volkov i sosol: drian' (....)' (285). This dream harks back to the original juxtaposition between drinking water and alcohol which lies at the very heart of Prepolozenie sequence - see footnote 41 of the present chapter.

83'Zamiatin even uses the verb verit' in this context: 'I poveril v Afriku Fedor Volkov' (279). The description of his eyes in terms of candles occurs in the final section of the story: '- Ekh! - tol'ko pomatyval Fedor strizhenoi po-rebiach'i kolgushkoi, tol'ko teplilis' svecok Bogu neobidnye ego glazki (....)' (286).

84'Shane, op cit., p. 112.

85'Popal. Afrika. Priniknut' teper' i ne otorvat' sia, pokuda....' (287). The verb popast' is ambiguous here, since it can refer either to the harpoon, meaning 'to strike home', or to Volkov himself collapsing at the prow of the boat. Earlier, for example, while about to harpoon the first whale, he thinks to himself: 'Okh, popadu. Okh, promakhnus' ....' [286]). If the first meaning is inferred, then Volkov dies thinking that he has earned his passage to Africa; in the case of the second meaning, Volkov dies without knowing whether he has struck home or not.

86'Kak pushku navel, kak zapal spustil - i sam Fedor Volkov ne pomnil: ot strakhu, ot radosti - pod se' podkatilos', v glazakh potemnelo' (286).

87'This phrase is echoed three times in the text. Firstly, when Indrik describes Africa: 'Raz niukhnut' - i ne otorvesh' sia: potuda niukhat' budesh', pokuda ne pomresh', vot dukh kakoi.....' (285). Secondly, when Volkov describes his dreams of the young girl: 'Da vo sne izvestno, nichego ne vykhodit: tol'ko rukami ona obov' et, kak togda, i ne otryvat' sia by potuda, pokuda ne umresh' -' (285).
And thirdly, just as he collapses: 'Priniknut' teper' - i ne otorvat' sia, pokuda....'(287).


89This episode takes place while Marei is fishing. The role played by *rusalki* is implied when Marei's mother talks about him having been 'pulled into the water' ('v omut utianulo!'). See Sever (I, 401).

90"Waldeinsamkeit (G 'forest loneliness'). A 'mode' word (apparently first coined by Tieck) during the German romantic period (....). It implies a turning away from reality into a dream world, a yearning for distant countries (of the mind as well as of actuality), a yearning for remoteness of time and place. The concept of the forest is important because forests are remote, wild, dark, lonely places where the spirit may commune with nature.' See the entry in J. A. Cuddon, *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, reprinted edition, London, 1991, p. 1038. It is worth noting that Volkov's favourite spot for contemplation is the forest: "Tut ot nego i spasalsia Fedor Volkov - v les, k Mysh' - navoloku' (281).
CHAPTER FOUR

Znamenie, Ahasuerus, and the legend of the invisible city of Kitezh

According to the manuscripts deposited in the Academy of Sciences' Institute of World Literature in Moscow (IMLI), Zamiatin began writing Znamenie during the first year of his stay in Great Britain, not in 1918 as previously surmised. The first draft of the story is dated September 1916 - in other words, roughly six months after his arrival in Newcastle on a ship-building contract at the Armstrong-Whitworth shipyards, and nine months after the first redaction of a story which would later evolve into Ostrovitiane; in addition, three further outlines have been dated from 1916, albeit provisionally, the last of these carrying a sketched plan for an unfinished short story set in Russia, Sem's polovnoi. In short, the year 1918 refers only to the story's publication in Al'manakh Mysl, a literary journal sponsored by the right-wing SRs, where it appeared in the same issue as a full version of Zamiatin's Scythian essay, 'Skifi li', after his return from England.

Taking into consideration the strongly Russian flavour of this story, it comes as a surprise to learn that Zamiatin started and might well have completed Znamenie while abroad, a time when he was isolated from his country of birth, received news from home with considerable delay, and was in the process of experimenting with different narrative techniques. Znamenie
may, of course, have been the execution of an idea previously germinating in his mind. The existence of two miniature prose fragments among his unfinished papers, respectively entitled *Grad nezdesnii* and *Monastyr*, both of which appear to date from the period immediately preceding his departure to England, suggest they may have been the seeds from which *Znamenie* eventually sprang. More will be said about the relationship between these three texts in due course. Another work written at this time, moreover, indicates that Zamiatin was not averse to employing the *lubok*-type stylization of his provincial Russian period as a disguise for his current, England-induced anxieties. *Pravda istinnaia*, a *skaz* narrative on the theme of homesickness, written in the style of a semi-literate peasant girl's letter to her mother after she has left home to take up employment in a town, may well reflect Zamiatin's apprehensions about Newcastle from his new, 'provincial' perspective. There is evidence to suggest that he experienced a similar sense of alienation in Britain, feeling himself to be an outcast in an unsympathetic and uncomprehending world. In *Na ostrove*, a prose fragment whose status is unclear, written shortly after the February Revolution, Zamiatin compared himself to Robinson Crusoe, a foreigner on an island cut off from the rest of the world by the North Sea whose mastery of the English language the 'natives' regarded with the sort of fascination normally reserved for performing seals: 'Slova u nas obshchie. No razve nam v chem-nibud’ gоворит’ sia?', he notes bitterly. His letters to his wife, Liudmila Nikolaevna, reveal a man who is bored, suffering from writer's block, full of anguish, ill and desperate for human companionship. Zamiatin was so depressed, in fact, that he eventually persuaded his wife to join
him in August 1916, just prior to his writing the first draft of

*Znamenie*.8

The anxiety-driven undercurrents in *Znamenie* - the young protagonist is isolated from the world at large, proudly asserts his individuality in a community of comfortable worshippers, suffers from self-doubt, anguish and torment, struggles frantically with sexual temptation, and succumbs eventually to suicidal despair - may well have had their origin in the problems Zamiatin experienced while adjusting to life in an alien and unfriendly environment. Nevertheless, the overtly Russian context of the narrative, in terms of both style and content, demands that *Znamenie* be approached primarily as an example of the early provincial fiction. From this point of view, undeniably, it constitutes something of a departure. This is the first work of the provincial period set exclusively within a Russian monastery, a fact which obviously determines the ecclesiastical sonorities of the narrative voice; furthermore, although descriptions of monks and monasteries feature often in the provincial works (see, for example, the satirical treatment of monastic tedium, drunkenness and debauchery in *Uezdnoe*), this is the first prose work to engage seriously with the question of religious belief. From the stylistic point of view, *Znamenie* borrows motifs from Russian apocryphal legend and accords them a central status within the story's symbolic structure; in particular, the opening and closing images of a 'fairy-tale' town reflected in the surface of a lake, its bells ringing as if from the invisible depths of the water. These images forge the central bond between *Znamenie* and the uncompleted fragments *Grad nezdeshtii* and *Monastyr'*, and
suggest that Zamiatin must have been acquainted with the celebrated legend of the invisible city of Kitezh. Comparative analysis reveals not only that he must have researched the legend in its various popular and written forms prior to his departure for Great Britain, but that he was also aware of the artistic treatment which the legend had received at the hands of writers such as Pavel Mel’nikov-Pecherskii, Vladimir Korolenko, and his colleague at Zavety, Mikhail Prishvin. In this way, Znamenie can be said to take its place within a particular 'literary populist' tradition and may be the first example of a work of prose fiction devoted exclusively to a reworking of the Kitezh legend itself.

Znamenie is set in a monastic community at some time before 1916 and ostensibly tells the story of a young man's search for salvation. The monastery is situated on the shores of a lake deep in the heart of provincial Russia, a location described as Larivonova pustyn'. The reader is introduced to this location by means of a brief lyrical passage in the opening paragraph which establishes the image of a secluded, 'fairy-tale' community lying reflected in the waters of the lake. We are told that life in this monastery has continued peacefully and uninterruptedly for as long as its ageing gate-keeper, Arsiusha, can remember - an endless round of fasting and giddy prayer as the Easter celebrations approach. This submarine calm is rudely disrupted, however, by the arrival of an outsider, an agitated and nervous young man called Seliverst who arrives mysteriously out of the blue and demands to be accepted within the community. Without giving any information about himself - Arsiusha's inquiry as to
whether he comes 'in peace' (s mirom [378]) is pointedly ignored - Seliverst is allowed to enter and very soon proceeds to assert his individuality. Rumoured to be 'educated', he prays strangely before an ancient icon of the Virgin Mary, much to Arsiusha's pious indignation. Later, he asks to be installed in a cell whose previous occupant, a iurodivyi, or Holy Fool, called Simeon, had once consented to being chained to the wall of his cell and ended his life eaten alive by rats. Seliverst, however, does not follow the practice of his illustrious predecessor. He keeps a wick-lamp burning day and night to ward off the hungry rodents, while himself maintaining an extremely ascetic regime: he remains in virtual isolation in this cell, emerging only for services, permits himself no cooked food, and accepts water only once a day. Despite the physical deterioration which this routine entails, it is strictly maintained. All that can be heard by the other monks outside the cell in the evenings and at nights is a muffled voice making bold, urgent and persistent pleas.

The exact nature of Seliverst's torment becomes apparent only after a personal interview with the Father Superior, who has been prompted to act by complaints from the monastery's elders. Father Vedenei is aware that the 'fires' of spiritual faith have long since cooled in the fraternity, and that the monastery houses monks who abuse alcohol and take the Lord's name in vain. He is intrigued by Seliverst's routine of severe fasting and devout prayer, and wonders whether he might not be the person to rekindle the monastery's spiritual ardour. During the course of their interview, however, the reader learns that Seliverst's strict asceticism is the product of a desperate attempt to control
extreme sexual craving. After ushering the young monk into his office, Vedenei points to a painting on the wall which depicts a 'Serpent of Carnal Desire' (Zmeevidnyi Blud [381]). This consists of a hundred-headed serpent, one head of which sucks at the breasts of a woman, another of which hovers over her stomach, while others suck at the hands and eyes of a multitude of sinners, described as sticking to the serpent's body 'like flies'. Seliverst recognises himself as one of these sinners - a gaunt individual, bearing the title 'craving' (alchba), into whose wide open mouth the serpent is pouring a river of fire - and admits: 'Tak, otche, alchu ia. Ogon' menia snedaet, nevozmozhnogo alchu, znameniia moliu - chtoby poverit' ...'(381). Vedenei expresses sympathy, but then remembers his position of authority and lectures him sternly on his insolence, the sin of pride and the 'petty temptations', and threatens to send him out into the fields to work as a cow herd.

Rumour soon starts to spread locally about Seliverst's unusual devotion. Pilgrims who regularly visit the monastery, finding that their usual intercessor, Arsiusha, is now too old and frail to receive them, decide to seek audience instead with Seliverst. Seliverst himself is uncertain of his power to give them succour, but starts to gain confidence after a summer service in Larivon's old chapel, during which he is called upon to cure a peasant woman who has passed out because of the stifling heat. After Seliverst has nervously placed his hands on the woman's face - his touch appearing miraculously to bring her back to life - a general commotion erupts among the large crowd. Amazed, but not yet convinced that this is the sign he has been seeking,
Seliverst rushes back to his cell to continue praying and firmly locks the door behind him. Later the same night a barn inside the monastery catches fire when a strong wind blows embers over the monastery walls from the campfires in the fields outside. A powerful blaze springs up which soon threatens to engulf the little wooden church in which the service of the previous day had taken place. Seliverst is called upon to produce a second miracle. Standing with the icon of the Virgin Mary held aloft, and feeling a surge of energy through his body, Seliverst makes the sign of the cross in front of the fire; as he does so, the fire seems to obey him, gradually reducing to smoke. Seliverst rushes back to his cell and locks the door: the red wick-lamp which had provided his only safeguard from the rats has mysteriously gone out. At this moment of personal triumph, paradoxically, Seliverst seems suddenly confused, empty and disorientated. His spiritual strength has been completely sapped: 'Sovershilos' dla nego pervoe v zhizni, velichaishee chudo: i srazu zhe potukhlo, pusto' (387). Fainting from fatigue, Seliverst contemplates quietly leaving the monastery without being noticed, but he has thrust a hand despairingly into Simeon's handcuffs and cannot escape. The next morning, unsurprisingly, he does not appear for morning mass. It is rumoured among the fraternity that a tall monk has been seen to enter the waters of the lake, which allegedly parted to accept him, followed shortly afterwards by another figure, half-human, half-animal. It is also rumoured that his rat-infested body has been found in its cell and that this is the reason the entrance has been bricked over. All that is known for sure, however, is that Seliverst and Arsiusha disappear from the monastery the day after the fire. The story ends with the image
of the small town reflected in the surface of the lake, its bells tolling in the aquamarine depths.

*Znamenie* has caused a certain amount of confusion amongst scholars, with few even able to agree on the basic plot. Shane, for example, contrasts Seliverst's enactment of a miracle with the 'profane thoughts' which flit through his mind just before he dies (the nature of these 'profane thoughts', however, is not clear).¹¹ Leech-Anspach contends that Seliverst's 'burning passion' is directed towards the Virgin Mary, and speculates as to whether we are supposed to view him as a type of 'psychopath'.¹² Dagmar Hobzová asks the far more (in my view) pertinent question of whether the miraculous force which quells the fire belongs to God or to the Devil, pointing out that the ambiguities of the 'sign' (perhaps in the Saussurean sense?) leave the reader in some doubt as to how exactly Zamiatin intended the story to be interpreted.¹³ A similar confusion prevails over the narrative style. Shane contends that *Znamenie* is written in the *skaz* style of the early provincial fiction, yet this is incorrect: the colloquial tendencies of the narrative voice, apart from the occasional use of popular expressions, are quite restrained and even relatively 'literary'.¹⁴ More importantly, there has been virtually no attempt to read the story as a 'thematic' stylization which depends for its meaning on the way in which it engages with the apocryphal literature of the past and the history of popular religion in Russia. To state, as Leech-Anspach does, that 'Zamiatin brings once again before our eyes the Russia of the past, with its saints, miracle-workers and religious fanatics' is meaningless without some attempt to explain why he might have chosen to do
so, or what the meaning of this choice might indicate. Stories about holy men and miracles were not devoid of political implications at a time when the canonization of saints was an instrument of imperial policy on the part of Tsar Nicholas II and the Empress Aleksandra Fedorovna. Zamiatin, who had been taken by his mother to see the relics of several celebrated saints in his youth, and visited the monastery where Serafim of Sarov had lived before his death in 1893, no doubt appreciated this fact. What is required, in other words, is a careful consideration of the text's internal mechanics, the significance of its religious imagery, the impact of its popular Russian stylization, and the possible political dimension at the time when it was written.

The most striking stylistic feature of Znamenie is the narrator's reliance on words with a strongly archaic and ecclesiastical shading. Within the opening section alone the reader encounters krasnyi, an adjective used in the first paragraph to mean 'glorious', its poetic and traditional sense, rather than 'red', its modern sense; the icon title, Shir'shaia nehes, an archaic expression most probably deriving from Greek choral hymns in praise of the Virgin Mary; the adjective, iavlennyi, which refers to the miraculous origin of the icon and its 'wonder-working' properties; and the noun, tverd', which, when coupled with the adjective nebesnaia means 'the heavenly firmament'. The use of this antiquated lexicon is evidence of Zamiatin's close acquaintance with the monuments of ancient Russian literature, monuments which he recommended to his pupils in lectures at the House of Arts as potential source-material for a modern writing style - indeed, E. J. Brown has argued that the narrative
style of *Znamenie* evokes 'the language of church chronicles (....) in an extremely primitive form.'\(^{19}\) Like Zamiatin's first hagiographical parody, *O sviatom grekhe Zenitsy devy. Slovo pokhval'noe* (1916), this archaic and acutely stylized language functions as a device for 'making strange' (*ostranenie*): the reader is drawn involuntarily into the world of the medieval imagination, a 'fairy-tale' world in which the fantastic events of Orthodox Christian legend are revered as revelatory and true. Certainly, without this tactic the reader is unlikely to appreciate properly the miracle of the conflagration scene, which depends for its effectiveness and credibility on the popular belief in Russia that icons possess the power to protect holy places from danger and destruction. Reinforced by the palpable *drevnost* of its texture, therefore, the plot of *Znamenie* is perceived to unfold against a broad, historical canvas, one which appears to be engaging in a poetic dialogue with the Orthodox culture, language and imagination of the pre-Petrine era.

This dialogue is encountered almost immediately in the form of the word *pustyn* (378), which supplies the main topographical setting for the plot's development. The monastery functions typically in literature as a sanctuary or refuge from worldly affairs; yet the word *pustyn*, with its etymological roots drawn from the adjective for 'empty' and 'deserted' (*pustoi*), has a more specific connotation in Russian religious culture. Traditionally, these monasteries, cloisters or hermitages were positioned in areas of great seclusion and were powerfully isolated from the concerns of the non-contemplative world; indeed, they owed their very names to the decision of a particular anchorite or hermit at
some point in the distant past to reject urban 'civilization' and seek spiritual perfection in the wilderness, surrounded only by primitive nature. Symbolically, by entering Larivonova pustyn', and living in the almost total isolation of his cell, Seliverst conforms to an historical pattern established by Jesus Christ during his forty days in the wilderness, then adopted as a model of ascetic practice by the Christian fathers who established the monastic movement in the Egyptian and Palestinian deserts, and again in turn by the founders of the monastic movement in Kievan Rus'. The mention of the cave (peshchera [382]) inhabited by the hermit, Larivon, recalls the very first monastery to be established on Russian territory, the eleventh century Kievan cave monastery, also founded by a hermit (zatvornik). The little wooden church in which it is said he used to pray, described as 'made of logs' (brevenchataia [383]), dates Larivon's ascetic ordeal from the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries at the very latest. Furthermore, Zamiatin's use of the word kinoviia (381) to describe this community refers to the very earliest and most primitive type of cloister.

As recorded in the Lives of saints, the life of the ascetic was not without its ordeals. A conventional topos in hagiographic literature consists of episodes during which the saint is visited in the wilderness by demonic forces bent on compromising his or her spiritual purity; almost without exception, as in the celebrated case of St. Martinian, the saint invoked by Russians for protection against carnal desire (bludnye strasti), this takes the form of Woman. The dilemma of Seliverst plainly belongs to this type of pattern; however, like Tolstoi in Otets Sergii (1898),
Zamiatin is interested in this pattern ultimately only to subvert it through irony, ambiguous ellipses and paradoxical reversal. Seliferst's arrival, for example, is mysterious and unexplained. It is not known whether he arrives at the monastery as a desperate last gamble to save himself, or whether he has already lapsed sexually by the time he arrives. Although 'educated', he claims the status of a monk and therefore does not have to go through the normal procedures in order to be admitted; yet he is unorthodox in the way that he prays and the lack of humility which he displays before the icon of the Virgin Mary (there is a hint here of sexual imperative). His urgent night-time appeals to the Mother of God, and the author-narrator's deliberate concentration on the image of her blue pallium, or cloak (sinii pokrov [379]), imply that Seliferst regards himself as a penitent seeking salvation, rather than a true Man of God. Such an interpretation of his position would seem to be confirmed by the scene in Vedenei's office: Seliferst recognizes himself as a 'sinner' (greshnik [381]) consumed by the fires of carnal desire (blud [381] can refer both to lechery and adultery). The ensuing struggle to control his thoughts and desires might be treated almost as an episode from a hagiographic narrative - indeed, his strict dietary regime is the Orthodox means with which to limit the capacity for sinful thought. However, the final chapter of Znamenie manages to confuse and blunt the conventional expectation. On the one hand, Seliferst seems to succeed in his endeavour, acquiring in the process a local reputation for wonder-working - he miraculously extinguishes the roaring flames which threaten to engulf the old church, and his fate is juxtaposed with that of the two other revered and saintly figures.
in the tale, the ageing gate-keeper, Arsiusha, and the *iurodivyi*, Simeon. On the other hand, instead of experiencing relief and joy at the delivery of the sign which he had demanded as a condition of belief, Seliverst experiences only despair and immeasurable fatigue. The crucial question to be answered is the source and meaning of this despair.

*Znamenie* marks the beginning of a phase in Zamiatin's fiction in which Orthodox teaching on the subject of sex is strongly attacked, for the most part by subverting stock themes and images taken from the Bible and the medieval literary tradition. The use of fire imagery in *Znamenie* is an excellent illustration of this strategy. In the Old and New Testaments, fire tends to symbolize the presence and manifestation of divine power: the Word of God is described in terms of a flame (Jeremiah, 23:29); the end of the world is depicted in terms of destructive conflagrations (second epistle of the apostle Peter, 3:10-11); the spirit of the Holy Ghost, metaphorically depicted in the shape of a dove, descends at Pentecost and speaks to the apostles with 'tongues of fire' (Acts, 2:1-5); the prophet Elijah ascends to heaven in a chariot of fire (II Kings, 2:11); and Jehovah appears to Moses in the form of a burning bush which is not consumed by the flames (Exodus, 3:2). These images gave rise to the expression 'sacred flame' (*sviaschennyi ogon*), a common enough metaphor for faith in Christian literature. Moreover, this sacred flame is often juxtaposed with the conventional 'flame' of sexual desire. In hagiographic literature, fire is a spiritually cleansing force which paradoxically quenches the 'burning' temptations of the flesh. In the *Life* of St. Martinian, for instance, the saint
walks on hot coals in order to control his carnal desires; and in
the celebrated Life of the Old Believer, Avvakum, the archpriest
holds his hand over three candle flames during the erotic
confessions of a young woman so that the self-inflicted pain will
distract him from sexual arousal. At its most paradoxical, and
most relevant as far as Znamenie is concerned, this theme
features in the Orthodox festival of the Icon of the Virgin Mary of
the Burning Bush (Ikona Presviatoi Bogoroditsy Neopalimoi
kupiny), which is celebrated on 4 September. Deriving from
sacred songs which compare the Holy Mother's preservation of
her virginity during the conception and subsequent birth of Jesus
Christ with the burning bush of Moses' vision in the desert (she
'burns' with the sacred flame, but remains 'unconsumed', i.e.
chaste), this festival gave rise to the belief popular in Russia that
the Holy Virgin could be invoked as a protectress against fires -
hence the common practice of walking around burning buildings
holding the icon aloft in the hope of extinguishing the flames.30

If there is a clear distinction in the Orthodox imagination between
the 'sacred flame' of divine power and the carnal 'flame' of
human desire, in Znamenie this distinction is deliberately
blurred. Initially, fire is equated explicitly with the Orthodox
faith, as when Father Vedenei contemplates the state of the
monastery under his supervision and concludes: 'ni v kom ognia
net, dukhom oskudela pustyn' (381). We note also that the
author-narrator has earlier drawn a comparison between the
flames of the monastery candles glowing in the dark and the
scarlet-coloured fern-flower, or paporotnik (379), a flower which
blooms only twice a year and was associated in the popular
relational imagination with the resurrected spirit of Christ. As
the narrative progresses, however, these images are subject to a
delicate subversion. Seliverst's carnal desires are described as a
'river of fire' (ognennaia reka [381]). In a subversive allusion to
Pentecost, the flames threatening the church are described as
'fiery doves' (ognennye golubi [386]); later still, they are
compared to the 'thin, rosy tongues' of 'little devils'. Just prior
to this moment, in an ironic and explicitly sexual allusion to the
original fern-flower metaphor, the narrator describes how the
'fiery seed' of the wind causes a mass of 'hungry, dazzling
flowers' to burst swiftly into bloom. The effect of this
penultimate chapter is to transfer the element of fire from the
realms of the sacred into the realms of the profane, with the fire
that threatens to destroy the old church the symbolic equivalent
of the 'fire' which 'consumes' Seliverst, the hapless sinner.
Confusingly, this fire is also associated with the 'inextinguishable
fire' (negasimyi ogon' [387]) which burns in Seliverst's wick-
lamp day and night, his 'only salvation' against marauding rats.
The sentence which communicates the sensation of emptiness and
anti-climax which he feels when returns to his cell - 'srazu zhe
potukhlo, pusto' (387) - applies not only to his disappointment,
but also potentially to the miraculous dousing of the flames which
threatened the chapel earlier and the wick-lamp in his cell which
has mysteriously gone out. Paradoxically, by suppressing the
'flames of desire' which 'consume' him, his own version of the
'sacred flame', Seliverst denies the very force which keeps him
alive spiritually. Ironically, having entered the 'wilderness'
(pustyn' [378]) at the very beginning of the narrative, Seliverst
ends his life in an analogous, spiritual void (pustota [387]).
As abundantly illustrated elsewhere in Zamiatin's fiction, *Znamenie* pursues an argument about the competing claims of the flesh versus the spirit. This theme, which runs counter to the traditional insistence on celibacy as a pure ideal, is explored primarily through the relationship between Seliverst and the ageing gatekeeper, Arsiusha. The latter is a model of Orthodox propriety, fierce in his love of the icon of the Virgin Mary, humble in prayer, and generous in the blessings he gives to visiting pilgrims. Arsiusha's saintliness is not in question: his status as 'elder' (*starets*) evokes a peculiarly Russian notion of spirituality, since these were cloistered men and women who gave spiritual direction to thousands of pilgrims daily and provided, by their lives of prayer, a linking force between human beings and God - hence their official status as 'intercessors' (*zastupniki*); in addition, the attribute of *prozorlivost* (378), which relates to powers of vision, prophecy and presentiment is a saintly quality which the Orthodox Church took into consideration as part of the canonization process. It is intimated, nonetheless, that Arsiusha's weakness owing to his advanced years has led to a corresponding decline in his spiritual powers; now barely a living relic, he functions as a symbol of the Orthodox Church's waning strength and decrepitude. When Father Vedenei considers the condition of the monastery, he recognizes that life in the wilderness has 'depleted' the spiritual resources of the fraternity: Arsiusha, once sturdy and strong, is compared to a mouldy oak tree, covered in moss, and virtually on the point of collapse. This image is echoed again later when the author-narrator compares Arsiusha with the old church standing in memory of
the original hermit, Larivon: both are ancient, covered in moss, and lean to the ground.\textsuperscript{37} Seliverst, by contrast, is vigorous and energetic in his praying and ascetic discipline; moreover, by assuming the role of \textit{starets} and \textit{zaprupnik} before the visiting pilgrims because Arsiusha is now too tired ('Star stal Arsiusha, starekhonek. Netu sily dosel' noi' [382]), he takes over \textit{de facto} from the ageing gate-keeper. There are indications that he is perceived by the community as a new 'messiah': Vedenei, espying him at vespers, wonders whether he is not 'the One',\textsuperscript{38} while Arsiusha's apocalyptic ringing of his handbell after the cure of the old woman, and his announcement that he is going to Jerusalem have all the hallmarks of a prophetic announcement of the Second Coming. By linking these ambiguous details to the mention of the Last Judgement in chapter three, it is revealed that the monastery perceives Seliverst as some sort of Christ reincarnate, or saviour figure; indeed, the rumour that the waters of the lake have been seen to part miraculously in order to receive him signals the sure emergence of a local legend on the part of the local community, pilgrims and brothers alike.

In common with his unorthodox manner of prayer, which is too 'proud' and 'fierce' for Arsiusha's liking, Seliverst's claim to 'messiah' status is unconventional from the point of view of Orthodox theology; moreover, the ambiguity of his saintly status is indicated by the symbolic parallels established between him and Simeon Pokhabnyi, a 'fool for Christ's sake' (\textit{iurodivyi Khrista radi}). Seliverst's decision to move into Simeon's cell is interesting in light of the traditional 'double status' accorded the Holy Fool. By common consent, the \textit{iurod} was a self-appointed social
outcast, one who voluntarily turned his back on conventional modes of behaviour and deliberately denied himself physical comfort in the name of 'folly'. Some fools were officially canonized by the Orthodox Church because of their ascetic feats and willingness to share the lives of the poor; others were deemed capable of prophetic revelations and miraculous cures.\textsuperscript{39} At the same time, the feigned madness and unnerving displays of indecency which frequently accompanied their acts of folly (Simeon's name, \textit{pokhabnyi}, means 'obscene' and 'vulgar' in Russian)\textsuperscript{40} tended to blur the distinction between the divine and demonic nature of their powers, making the question of sanctification a thorny one. Essentially, the problem consisted of trying to define the boundary which separated 'divine madness', which attempted to imitate Christ's 'folly' of allowing himself to be crucified on the cross, and ordinary insanity or mental instability, which was viewed in medieval times as possession by the Devil. Although popularly venerated, therefore, the \textit{iurod} was often an ambiguous and controversial figure.\textsuperscript{41}

Zamiatin's choice of name for his \textit{iurod}, Simeon, may well have been motivated by a desire to invoke the Greek monk and eccentric of the sixth century, Simeon Salos, whose 'folly' consisted of living amongst harlots and indulging in obscene displays of sexual excess - indeed, his celebrated, but unconventional attainment, literally, of 'passionlessness' (\textit{besstrastie}) may well be apposite in a tale which charts the attempts of a young monk to control his own passions.\textsuperscript{42} Furthermore, it is important to recognize that the very name itself, which puns on the Greek word for 'sign' (\textit{semeion}), and is
therefore synonymous with the title of Zamiatin's story (*znamenie*), places this character at the very epicentre of the text. Seliverst, although he identifies himself with the figure of the *iurod*, and self-evidently knows the history of his veneration within the monastery, by no means enjoys an uncomplicated affinity with the unfortunate man. It is difficult to speculate in this sphere on the basis of the little information which Zamiatin's author-narrator provides us about Simeon. Nevertheless, his successor's 'insolent' (*derzostno [381]*) and 'abusive' (*khul'no [381]*) mode of behaviour towards such sacred objects as the icon of the Virgin Mary would be the very antithesis of the Fool's customary humility; moreover, it is this which gives cause to the elders' complaint that Seliverst should not be allowed to occupy the cell of the dead Simeon, a man whom they regard as righteous and virtuous. This attitude on the part of the other elders assumes a degree of importance towards the end of the narrative, when the object of their displeasure shares the same fate as his illustrious predecessor. The reader can only speculate as to why Simeon gave himself to be eaten alive by rats - perhaps it was an act of Christian folly born out of a desire for painful self-sacrifice, or perhaps recognition of his own failure to conquer his 'obscene' thoughts. Whatever the case, if Seliverst finds himself chained to the wall, and thus doomed to certain death, it is an act of human folly only.\(^43\) Not knowing the true reason for Seliverst's death, but no doubt considering it odd in view of the miracle enacted the previous night, the hierarchy orders the entrance of the tower to be bricked over and the whole affair hushed up. However, the reader has already learnt that Seliverst's 'disappearance' is not the equivalent of Simeon's
suicide, and that Seliverst's death has been preceded by the complete erosion of belief and confidence in the purpose of his sacrifice. The miracle is achieved, God has made His divine presence felt, yet this proves an insufficient condition of Belief for the ever hungry Seliverst.

The paradox of seeking an ideal, and yet rejecting that ideal once it is obtained, lies at the heart of Zamiatin's vision of the authentic spiritual revolutionary. In his essay on Fedor Sologub, Zamiatin used the phrase nesytye dushi, literally, 'insatiable' or 'hungry souls', to describe seekers after Truth who were unable to accept the realisation of their goals. Although this essay was written some eight years after Znamenie, the notion of eternal 'insatiability' is fundamental to Zamiatin's ideas about Life and Art, and applies with equal vigour to a number of characters from his earlier stories. Seliverst is identified symbolically with these nesytye dushi at the very start of the narrative when Arsiusha reminds him of the 'passion songs' dedicated to 'insatiable souls' sung annually during Passion Week: 'Popomni, brat, na Strastnoi-to poetsia: nesytaia dusha' (378). This remark has been preceded by the author-narrator's poetic use of the adjective miatezhnyi, with its connotations of 'alarm' and 'disquiet', as well as the description of Seliverst's fingers fiddling impatiently with his clothing, all of which suggests a restless and urgent nature. Undeniably, images of 'hunger' and 'hungering' are crucial to the story's fabric, both in the literal and figurative sense. Seliverst's severe fasting and refusal of cooked food means, literally, that he 'goes hungry' - hence his recognition of himself as the 'gaunt' sinner in the painting hanging in Father Vedenei's
office. The title given to this painting, 'alchba', means 'hunger' (golod), as well as 'craving' (zhadnost') and 'insatiability' (nenasytnost'); while the verb derived from the noun, alkat', means 'to hunger' (byt' golodnym), 'to fast' (postit'sia) and 'to crave' (zhazhdat') and is employed by Seliverst himself to express his craving for a sign (we note that he himself is 'consumed' by fire). Doubtless it is significant that the Sologub story mentioned in Zamiatin's 1924 article, Alchushchii i zhazhdushchii (1908), is a tale about a host of medieval Crusaders who, thirsting and dying of hunger in the Syrian desert, survive on fantasies of the miraculous alone in order to reach the holy city of Damascus. The epigraph, taken from a novel by Lady Evelyn Warwick - 'inye verili i spaslis', inye ne verili i pogibli - ranee zhe vsekh pogib sam ocharovatel' - is also relevant to the existential condition which Zamiatin seeks to explore in Znamenie, namely, the curse of a spiritual thirst so powerful that it cannot ever be slaked.

The spiritual condition which Zamiatin poeticises in Znamenie is not only an expression of his debt to Sologub - it is also a deliberate reworking of the apocryphal legend of the Wandering Jew, references to whom begin to appear in Zamiatin's critical articles at around this time. In my view, the importance of this legend for Zamiatin at this crucial point in the development of his artistic philosophy cannot be overstated, even if it has been ignored by scholars hitherto. Ahasuerus (Agasfer in Russian) is the 'insatiable soul' par excellence, a figure whom Zamiatin deliberately compared to the nomadic and freedom-loving Scythian in his seminal manifesto, 'Skifi li?', which was published
in the same issue of *Mysl'* as Znamenie: 'Udel podlinnogo skifa -
ternii pobezhdennykh,' he wrote, 'ego ispovedanie - eretichestvo;
sud'ba ego - sud'ba Agasfera (....).'^50^ Towards the end of this
manifesto, Zamiatin wrote of 'defeat and martyrdom in the
earthly sphere' and the 'eternal reaching out, but never reaching'
of the true Romantic and spiritual revolutionary.^51^ Later still, in
his article on Sologub, he linked the tragic figure of Ahasuerus
with the despairing knight-pilgrim of *Alchushchii i zhazhdushchii*,
Romua'ld of Turennes, describing them both as 'insatiable souls'
unable to accept the attainment of a self-proclaimed Ideal:
'Velikii i tiazhkii ikh rok v tom, chto ikh ne udovletvorit nikakoi
dostignutyi Damask: vsiakoe dostizhenie, vsiakoe voploshchenie
ubivaet dlia nikh nastoiashchii Damask (....)'.^52^ Zamiatin's
borrowing of the Ahasuerus paradigm indisputably involved a
revision of the legend as originally conceived, although this
process had been under way ever since the story of the Jew first
captured the imagination in the thirteenth century. According to
the legend, the sources for which are still a subject of much
dispute, the Jew was reputed to have refused Christ a brief
moment of respite on the road to Golgotha, for which he was
refused the peace of the grave and condemned to eternal
wandering throughout the ages until the Second Coming, for only
Christ could grant him salvation.^53^ Zamiatin's concept of the
spiritual revolutionary betrays the influence of the English and
German Romantics, in whose poetry Ahasuerus was envisaged as
the incarnation of suffering humanity, a defiant rebel and sinner
whose sceptical, rational intelligence made him the very
embodiment of religious doubt.^54^ Moreover, there can be little
doubting the appeal of this Romantic gloss on the legend within
the specific context of post-1917 cultural and ideological politics. The curse of the Jew provided Zamiatin with a ready-made poetic model with which to articulate his scepticism vis-a-vis the possibility of establishing 'paradise-on-earth' and his refusal to accept that struggle ceased simply because of the notional attainment of some kind of ideal. In 'Skifi li?', Ahasuerus is the sceptical intellectual who cannot accept the 'victorious Revolution' in any sphere of human activity - thus for Zamiatin, he was the restless seeker, the tragic, solitary and sorrowful incarnation of the principle of 'eternal forward movement'.

Although Znamenie was most probably completed prior to the October Revolution, it shows every sign of being an early, fictional expression of this Ahasuerus paradigm. This can be seen not only in the circularity of the narrative, in which the end symbolically leads back to the beginning, suggesting eternal cyclical movement, but also in the poetic motifs used in relation to Seliverst himself. It is unlikely that Zamiatin sought identification of his protagonist through physical characterisation - there was, in any case, no consistent stereotype for Ahasuerus in Western or Russian literature, and artists portrayed him for descriptive purposes in accordance with their requirements. Nevertheless, a few distinguishable traits came to dominate: his piercing gaze; his quiet and taciturn manner; the rarity with which he smiled or laughed; his lean, wry and gaunt physiognomy; and his exceptional height. In addition, there was the aura of constant mystery which surrounded him and the theme of 'eternal wandering', frequently treated obliquely or metaphorically. Seliverst's characterization, it should be said, conforms quite
strongly with this pattern: his arrival at the monastery is mysterious - he is introduced simply as an 'unknown monk' (*neznaemyi monakh* [379]); his tanned face suggests that he has been wandering for some time; his exceptional height is mentioned twice (379 & 388); his eyes, praying strangely before the icon of the Virgin Mary, bore into her image like gimlets; he is thin and gaunt; he is reluctant to engage in conversation with other monks in the monastery; he recognizes himself as 'endlessly swallowing' the flames of carnal desire in the painting in Father Vedenei's office; lastly, there is mention in *Znamenie* of the Last Judgment, an event closely linked in the New Testament with Christ's Second Coming. *Znamenie* can also be said to explore the curse of 'eternal wandering', albeit in an unorthodox manner. By this, I mean that while Seliverst clearly dies in a corporeal sense (although even this aspect of his fate is shrouded in mystery), his 'soul' or 'ghost', according to the other monks in the monastery, symbolically rises from the dead to continue his mission. The possible repetition of his 'eternal fate' is signalled by the echoing of the lake imagery at the beginning and end of the tale: Seliverst's arrival at the monastery is described in terms of the 'green depths' of the lake opening before him ('razverzlas' pered Seliverstom zelenyi glub' [379]); and the same image is used again to describe his departure from the monastery after 'death' ('voda pered nim rasstupilas' (....)' [388]). One way of reading this would be to view Seliverst's re-entering of the lake after his death as an open-ended process which takes him back to the beginning of the narrative to start his endless heretical struggle all over again. His fate thus acquires a universal, existential pathos - like Sisyphus, condemned by the
gods eternally to roll the same, huge boulder up the side of a mountain, or Prometheus, the Titan, who tells mortal men the secret of fire and is chained eternally to the side of a mountain as divine punishment, the fate of Seliverst is a metaphor for humanity punished divinely by the Fall and destined to continue the search for the faith.

Zamiatin's contribution to the reworking of the Ahasuerus legend lies in the exaggerated agitation and restlessness of his protagonist - unlike the ancient, world-weary Jew who wanders disconsolately through the pages of Western literature, Seliverst is driven by a sexual hunger and crazed inner turmoil unusual even by Zamiatin's standards. Like the essay, 'Skifi li?', Znamenie constitutes a general existential proposition, rather than a specific dramatization of intellectual attitudes towards the October Revolution - the accurate dating of the narrative to 1916 makes this self-explanatory. Nevertheless, the title of the story, which possesses both a symbolic and prognosticatory dimension (znamenie can mean 'augury', as well as 'sign' and 'symbol'), suggests that this proposition has ramifications beyond the personal and philosophical. As we have indicated, the 'appearance' of Ahasuerus was traditionally associated with imminent disaster or impending doom, and the eschatological currents running through Zamiatin's tale are intriguing in the light of the political situation in 1916 and 1917 as far as Russia was concerned. Not only was the country at the mercy of foreign armies, but it was also suffering serious domestic, political strife. On the one hand, Zamiatin's incorporation of a wonder-working icon into his narrative is suggestive in the light of this external
military threat, since icons of the Virgin Mary were believed to have given Russian armies miraculous victories over foreign invaders in the past; on the other hand, the author-narrator's use of the word мятьнiй i in connection with Seliverst's arrival, coupled with the veiled allusions to the disruption he causes within a 'lazy' community, presents the possibility of a domestic political allegory. Certainly, the vision of the old church threatened by fire belongs to a range of apocalyptic imagery in the work of writers like Aleksandr Blok, Andrei Bely, Aleksei Remizov, Maksimilian Voloshin and others, many of whom belonged to Ivanov-Razumnik's Scythian circle and predicted the destruction of the 'old world' and the rise of the 'new' in the Scythian collection which Zamiatin reviewed (and attacked) in 'Skifi li'.

In this context, it is crucial to explore the symbolic associations suggested by the opening image of the town reflected in the waters of a lake and the pealing of bells as if from under the surface, an image made all the more striking by virtue of the privileged place it occupies both at the beginning and the end of the narrative. For many contemporary readers this would undoubtedly have been recognized as an allusion to the Kitezh legend, one very much in vogue among neo-populists and radical intellectuals in the latter half of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Superficially, this legend would seem to possess little of direct relevance to Znamenie: essentially, it recounts the story of a beautiful and holy city built in the twelfth century on the shores of a lake which miraculously disappeared, thanks to divine intervention, at the moment when it was about
to be sacked by invading Tatar hordes. However, due to the many orally recorded and written versions of this legend, not to mention the idiosyncratic adaptations undertaken by writers and artists in the latter half of the nineteenth century, Kitezh had by 1914 acquired a richness and complexity which involved several competing strands. For Orthodox believers, the city represented Kievan Rus’ saved by divine intervention to protect its cultural identity and spiritual purity in the face of a barbaric 'Eastern' invasion - in this form, it possessed an almost timeless significance for Russian intellectuals and developed ultimately into a general metaphor for spiritual 'withdrawal' in the face of chaos, revolt, invasion and official persecution.\textsuperscript{65} For Old Believers alleged to have compiled the written version of the legend, the invisible city was a symbol of pre-Petrine Russia and the Old Faith destroyed by Patriarch Nikon's reforms (according to Komarovich, this explains why Kitezh was sometimes envisaged in the form of a monastery) - for them, therefore, it was an 'earthly paradise', a quiet refuge and safe haven which, like the New Jerusalem, would reappear after Christ's Second Coming, a guiding beacon during years of wandering, hunger and oppression.\textsuperscript{66} As a result of the widespread popularity of this legend, the written and oral versions of which were published by various sources in the nineteenth century, this city became the object of a religious cult based around the shores of Lake Svetloiar, which lies about one hundred kilometres north-east of the town of Gorodets in Semenov county, Nizhni Novgorod province. According to eye-witness accounts, both Orthodox and sectarian worshippers made annual pilgrimages to the lake on
June 23, the Eve of St. John (Ivan Kupala), in order to catch the sound of its bells tolling in the depths of the water.67

Zamiatin's borrowing of this legend can be shown in several ways, both by direct appeal to written versions of the legend, as recorded by ethnographers, and the various artistic treatments of the subject in the work of Mel'nikov-Pecherskii, Korolenko and Prishvin (not to mention Rimskii-Korsakov, whose opera, Skazanie o nevidimom grade Kitezhe i deve Fevronii, was premiered in February 1907 while Zamiatin was still living in St. Petersburg).68 The city's most celebrated leitmotif was the reflection of the holy city in the lake and the sound of its bells pealing softly beneath the water. In Mel'nikov-Pecherskii's ethnographic novel, V lesakh, the opening paragraph offers a lyrical vision of the city as if glimpsed for real, with its white walls, golden cupolas, monasteries, crenellated tower-chambers, stone palaces and houses hewn from solid, ancient wood - on quiet summer evenings, the author claims, the outline of the city can be seen reflected in the waters of the lake and the deep rumbling of its bells can be heard during the night.69 It should be noted that neither motif derives from the written versions of the legend, but rather from the local folklore recorded by Mel'nikov-Pecherskii himself around the shores of Lake Svetloiar; it is this description, however, which influences many of the subsequent adaptations, most famously Rimskii-Korsakov's opera, where the tolling of the bells and the reflection are key motifs in the libretto.70 The city became known in popular parlance as the 'invisible' (nevidimy), 'unearthly' (nezdeshtnii), or 'searched-for city' (vzyskuemyi grad).71 Korolenko, visiting the lake in the
summer of 1890, remarked upon the eerie calm which prevailed along its shores, a location seemingly distant from the world at large, and one which he divided into two spheres of being, the authentic, but invisible, and the inauthentic, but visible, which intermingled and flowed into each other; like Mel’nikov-Pecherskii, he too echoed the popular belief that only 'righteous people' could perceive this authentic reality. Most visitors to the lake, Mel’nikov-Pecherskii, Korolenko and Prishvin included, repeated claims that righteous people had been rumoured to reach a monastery by the lake which subsequently turned out to be the entrance to the holy city. Finally, the water of the lake was allegedly so deep that no one had ever reached, seen, or touched the bottom.

Although the Kitezh legend was by no means the only legend involving sunken cities and tolling bells - the Kostroma Academic Society claimed to have discovered several in the areas immediately bordering Svetloiar, many of them deriving from historical events of the past - there are compelling reasons for supposing that Zamiatin was alluding to Kitezh. It is unquestionable, bearing in mind the neo-populist circles within which he moved at this time, and his known love of, and interest in classical music, that he was familiar with the legend in some form or other. The city is mentioned explicitly in Uezdnoe, which shows that he must have encountered it as early as 1911; moreover, two unfinished fragments, Nezdeschnii grad and Monastyr', suggest that he may have been thinking of experimenting with the legend more ambitiously. Although I have not been able to inspect Nezdeschnii grad, the title and its
likely dating is significant; while Monastyr' starts with a description of a monastery which is then compared to a 'mysterious, celestial town' lying nestled along the banks of the Volga. This 'town' is associated with the soft pealing of bells which seems to come from below the surface of the water, as if from some 'invisible city' (nevidimyi grad). Interestingly, some indication of the actual geographical location is given through the mention of goods hawked at a fair to celebrate the monastery's altar-day: the 'combs' from Iaroslavl', the 'honey-cakes' from Kineshma, and the 'carved wooden artefacts' (iskusnye baklushi) from Dievo Gorodishche place this 'town' at some point along a stretch of the Volga which flows between the towns of Iaroslavl' and Kineshma. Although this is not an area in the immediate vicinity of Lake Svetloiar, it is a stretch of the Volga along which the Kitezh legend would definitely have been known: the two oldest recorded versions of the Kitezh Chronicle hail from Iaroslavl'; while the village of Sopelki, only a few miles south-east of Dievo Gorodishche on the south bank of the Volga, was the birth-place of the Old Believer sect thought to have compiled them. In the absence of concrete information, it is impossible to establish whether these facts would have been known to Zamiatin. Yet it should be remembered that the fanatical world of such sectarians as the stranniki, or beguny, was well known to Zamiatin because of his parents; according to Strizhev, these wandering monks were constant visitors to his home in Lebedian', and their speech and turns of phrase supplied him with the poetic backbone of his skaz ornamentation.
Although there is no evidence outside the texts to link them with each other formally, the cross-echoing of images suggests that Znamenie must have been the final crystallization of ideas first explored tentatively in Monastyr' (and possibly Nezdeskii grad): the peace and calm of the opening scenes, the comparison of the white-walled monasteries with towns, the tolling of the bells from the 'green depths', even the types of goods sold at the fair, are all identical. Nonetheless, certain important modifications have been introduced which undeniably affect our reading of the story. It is clear that the monastery in Znamenie is a symbolic location - unlike Monastyr', there is little sense of regional specificity and, apart from the general seclusion and isolation of the area, little to link Larivonova pustyn' directly to the actual geography of Lake Svetlojar. On the other hand, the description of this place as a world of fairy-tale means that the reader is not obliged to accept this location as ethnographically real or authentic in any respect. The introduction of a deep blue lake, representing a switch away from the Volga, anchors the story firmly to the legend in symbolic terms - the words ozero and glubokoe in the opening sentence, as well as the use of the adjective svetloe at the very end of chapter five (388), appear to be conclusive - while the analogy drawn between this monastery and a white-walled town, an analogy which strongly echoes the Old Believer versions of the legend, must be deemed significant. The reflection in the lake and the description of the bells in the second sentence can be traced directly to Mel'nikov-Pecherskii; so, too, can the peace, quiet and joy with which the monks in the monastery welcome the celebration of Easter. Comparing Znamenie with Monastyr', however, it is interesting to note the
substitution of the certain adjectives, such as 'invisible' (nev-idimyi) and 'heavenly' (nezdesnii), by the less specific 'fairy-tale' (skazochnyi); and the rejection of the city as an 'invisible' place which can be seen only by the 'righteous' in favour of a reflection visible to all. These alterations possess important symbolic ramifications which will be analysed in due course. In the meantime, it is worth remarking that the opening passage and its attendant motifs are all integrated carefully into the main framework of the narrative: the tolling of the bells is mentioned no fewer than six times during the course of the story, as are the 'green depths' of the lake.

In Uezdnoe, Kitezh functioned as a symbol of provincial Russia's religious conservatism and isolation from the revolutionary events of 1905. Timosha, the bar-room philosopher-drunk with liberal pretensions, notes gloomily that all the excitement in 'Babylonian' St. Petersburg is unlikely to reach his own town: 'My vrode, kak vo grad-Kitezhe na dne ozera zhivem: nichegoshen' ki u nas ne slykhат', nad golovoi voda mutnaia da sonnaia. A na verkh-u-to vse polykhaet, v nabat b'iu't' (I, 72). Entitled Vremena ('The Times We Live In'), this nineteenth chapter of Zamiatin's first novel is vital to an appreciation of the way in which the Kitezh legend functions in Znamenie. The subtle shift in narratorial perspective from a description of the view above the lake at the very beginning - 'I u samoi vody, na mkhu izumrudnom' (378) - to the experience of living 'underwater' mid-way through the first paragraph - 'I tak khorosho, tikhozhit' otdelennym ot mira zelenoi glub'iu' (378) - signals clearly that the drama of the ensuing narrative takes place below the surface
of the water, rather than above it; in other words, that there is a 'real' world (mir) which exists above the surface of the water and a 'fairy-tale' world (skazochnyi mir) which exists below it. This symbolic conceit is further pursued with a series of auxiliary images: the monastic community is a 'kingdom' governed by an 'underwater monarch' (podvodnyi tsar' [380]); the waters of the lake 'part' to admit Seliverst when he first enters the monastery (379); and his arrival is described in terms of a stone which causes ripples to expand outwards across its surface (379). All this serves to reinforce the specific parallel with Uezdnoe. The opening section establishes the image of a community which has for centuries preserved a simple and traditional way of life. It is cut off from the 'world at large', a notion reinforced by persistent use of the word mir to represent life beyond its walls: the phrase in the opening paragraph quoted above (378); the image of Seliverst's cell window blocked off from the world by iron bars ('ot mira zakreshchennoe reshetkoi' [380]); and Arsiusha's remark when Seliverst first arrives, which could be playing on a possible ambiguity in the Russian word mir (made possible by orthographical reform after the Revolution) i.e. 'do you bring the world with you?'

Already it should be obvious that Znamenie constitutes something of a refashioning of the Kitezh legend as popularly perceived. In the work of Mel'nikov-Pecherskii, Korolenko and Prishvin, all taking their cue from the apocalyptic fantasies of the sectarian imagination, Kitezh is envisaged variously as a 'heavenly city', a 'New Jerusalem', an 'earthly paradise' and a 'searched-for city', i.e. it is a place which does not exist in the
'here and now', but elsewhere, either in the future (after the end of history and the Second Coming) or in a spiritual dimension which parallels the present and is perceptible only in the eyes of the chosen few. All express their sceptical attitude towards this concept in one way or another, and view it as the product of an over-fanciful folk-religious imagination. Zamatin, however, opts for a different approach, one later imitated by Remizov and Voloshin. On the one hand, the general symbolic parallel is preserved: Larivonova pustyn' and Kitezh are both 'holy cities' or 'monasteries' saved miraculously from destruction by fire; thus, if Kitezh symbolizes the 'divine protection' of Russian cultural and spiritual values in the face of barbarism, then Larivonova pustyn' functions as a metaphor for Orthodox Christian withdrawal from the 'rebellious' (miatezhnyi ) world beyond its boundaries. On the other hand, the shift in perspective in the opening paragraph ensures that the semiotic codes which normally apply to the invisible city are reversed: far from existing in the form of a 'lost' world, one which 'disappeared' centuries ago, and is therefore 'invisible' to the modern eye, Kitezh in the guise of Larivonova pustyn' is visible to all and tangibly present, albeit at the bottom of the 'fairy-tale' lake. This is no religious utopia of the future - Vedenei's comment about the laziness of the monks and their lack of spiritual stamina suggests the contrary; rather, it is a world which has survived into modern times with its archaic values and mode of consciousness intact - exotic, fanciful and other-worldly. In essence, it is a poetic metaphor for pre-Petrine Russia, an imaginary world which 'disappeared' and remained at the bottom of its metaphorical lake until the present day. The introduction of the reflection motif thus functions as a framing
device which indicates the reader's entry into a different sphere of time, place and being. The reader moves from above the lake to below the lake, and thus enters the symbolic, 'fairy-tale' zone in which the apocalyptic events of Russian history are constantly replayed in the popular imagination: Batu Khan, the Schism, the 1905 revolution, the 1917 revolution - all events from which Holy Russia recoiled.

If we accept this perspective and, Timosha-like, regard the monastery in Znamenie as a symbol of provincial, conservative, pre-Petrine 'Rus', still slumbering at the bottom of a symbolic 'Lake Svetloiar', then evidently the text can be said to offer a political allegory. According to this scenario, the monastic community becomes a symbol of Holy Russia generally (Vedenei is described as an 'underwater tsar') and Seliverst the sinner becomes a new messiah who simultaneously challenges this community, and yet possesses the power to save it from destruction. That Seliverst is potentially the harbinger of some kind of upheaval is implied at several junctures in the text: Arsiusha's guarded response to his initial arrival (378); the author-narrator's remark that Arsiusha is afraid of 'rebellious' people (379); the image of the stone causing ripples to disturb the surface of the lake (379); and the elders' complaint that Seliverst's behaviour is causing 'trouble and dispute' (381). Seliverst's status acquires something of a wider symbolic dimension as it becomes apparent that he draws his power from those who come on pilgrimages to the monastery, rather than the brothers who live alongside him. At key moments in the tale, these pilgrims assume the dimensions of an invincible, powerful
and all-suffering crowd. On the first occasion their need for blessing is granted, Seliverst notices the 'invincible strength' emanating from their eyes: the 'impossible' is now 'possible', he thinks to himself, and his fear of the future subsides. Later, as he stands with the icon aloft to protect the old church from the fire, he looks over his shoulder towards the onlookers and feels a wave of 'incredible power' surging through his body - again, it is their eyes from which he draws his strength. These 'eyes' should be juxtaposed with the omnipresent 'eyes' of the icon, and seem to represent a force which lies outside the holy dogmas of the Church. The crowd is compared on two occasions to an ocean wave (383 & 386), a metaphor strongly reminiscent of one used by Zamiatin in a letter to his future wife, Liudmila Nikolaevna Usova, to describe the awesome power of the crowd during the 1905 revolution. The potentially political resonance of this image is further reinforced by the repeated, symbolic use of the colour red in the narrative: the wick-lamp which burns in Seliverst's cell is a 'red eye' (krasnyi glaz [380]), an image which can also be compared with the eyes of the icon; the Last Judgment takes place on a 'red day' (krasnyi den' [386]); the crowd moves apart 'like the Red Sea' (Chernnym morem [386]); and the fire which threatens to destroy Larivon's church is a 'red tongue' (krasnyi iazyk [387]). Intriguingly, it is the embers from the bonfires of the pilgrims outside the monastery, symbolic of the sin for which they are seeking forgiveness, which inadvertently start this fire; furthermore, fire as a metaphor for popular revolt appears in Zamiatin's letters in connection with the events of 1905 and the Kitezh passage in Uezdnoe.
In attempting to present a persuasive interpretation of these images, it is important not to be distracted by knowledge of subsequent events - in other words, the October Revolution - and the fact that the narrative was eventually published in the same almanach as 'Skifi li?'. Znamenie is the story of a sinner who seeks salvation and subsequently performs a miraculous feat in order to save the anachronistic community of which he is part, but to which he feels no true allegiance. Naturally, it is possible to read Znamenie as the fictional exploration of the Scythian paradox in a post-revolutionary context; yet this would require a crude parallel between an Orthodox community of monks and the new Soviet government, hardly convincing in view of the laziness of the fraternity and its known lack of spiritual fervour. A more persuasive line of argument would involve reading Znamenie as an exploration of an acute dilemma which dogged Zamiatin all his life - namely, his own paradoxical attitude towards medieval ecclesiastical culture, religious conservatism and the provinces generally. Echoes of Zamiatin's vacillating attitude towards Holy Russia can be found in the 'good-for-nothing', radical atheist Senia's love of 'old singing' in Neputevyi, a love which can be readily traced back to his creator; it may also be worth speculating on the degree to which Seliverst's conundrum has roots in Zamiatin's own conflict with his father after the aftermath of the 1905 events. In my view, Znamenie glances back anxiously to the traumatic family dispute which led eventually to their mutual estrangement; moreover, there is good reason to suspect that this estrangement might have been preying on Zamiatin's mind during 1916 and 1917 - partly, no doubt, because of the political ramifications of the February
Revolution, but also because of the recent death of his father. Letters written by Zamiatin to Liudmila Nikolaevna after his release from prison in 1906 and return to Lebedian - on the understanding that his parents would vouch for him - echo uncannily the symbolic themes of Znamenie and the nineteenth chapter of Uezdnoe: the peace and quiet of the provinces, far removed from the revolutionary turmoil in the capital, the political conservatism of the local inhabitants, and the disturbance, perhaps even trauma, caused to his family by his arrival and refusal to seek forgiveness for his past deeds. At one juncture in this correspondence he compares the family drama unfolding before him to Chekhov's Vishnevyi sad, a play conventionally interpreted as a lament for the passing of the 'old world'. Subsequently, as we now know, Zamiatin failed to reconcile himself with his father and the local church hierarchy. A letter to Liudmila Nikolaevna, dated 22 April 1906, reveals that his father was threatening to cut off his personal allowance; moreover, in his 1929 autobiography and reminiscences of the writer Leonid Andreev in 1922, Zamiatin recalled his continuing love-affair with the 'red-eyed mistress' of Revolution once he had illegally returned to the capital and plunged himself back into political activities. It was at this time that Zamiatin witnessed the Sveaborg revolt in the summer of 1906 while staying in Helsinki; and as Shane has observed, this period generally 'marked the apogee of Zamiatin's romantic attachment to the Bolshevik cause.'

As a work of popular fantasy which explores political themes through the ostensible mask of an ecclesiastical narrator, it is
only one short step from *Znamenie* to the 'miracle-tales', or *chudesa*, stories which parody not only the language, but also the formal elements of the hagiographical narrative. In the next chapter it will be argued that *O sviatom grekhe Zenitsy devy. Slovopokhval'noe*, the very first miracle-tale, probably predates *Znamenie* by at least eight months; yet it, too, despite being a satire, rather than a piece of straight fiction, plays with notions of saintliness and is intimately linked to political events unfurling in Russia during 1915 and 1916. Both tales are symptomatic of a new tendency in Zamiatin's fiction, one which again owes a great deal to Remizov. It was Remizov who had experimented with ecclesiastical material in *Limonar'* (1907), and then proceeded to exploit it, apparently for patriotic purposes, during the first two years of the First World War. If it is true, as E. J. Brown suggests, that 'Zamiatin's stylized language is his own most original aesthetic resource', one which gives the sophisticated reader an 'illusion of immediate contact with the deeply primitive', it is largely thanks to the earlier stylistic innovations of Remizov, even if the poetic instincts of these two writers are fundamentally at odds with each other. As we will see, Remizov largely celebrates the world of 'primitive' antiquity, while Zamiatin's position is ambiguous, ironic and sceptical - the response of a modernist whose position vis-à-vis the culture of the past is paradoxical.
1See Shane, op. cit., p. 25.

2Although I was not permitted to inspect these manuscripts, the IMLI catalogue for Zamiatin's archives gives the date, title, place and length of this first draft version. See IMLI, fond 47, opis' 1, ed. kh. 39. According to the same catalogue, Ostrovitiane was first conceived in the form of a forty-three page sketch entitled Kembl, dated 28 January 1916. See ibid., ed. kh. 32.

3The dating is provisional, since no dates are given on the second, third, or fourth drafts; however, the three versions do not vary significantly from the first in length, and they all preserve the same title. See ibid., ed. kh. 40-42. A version of the short fragment entitled Sem's polovinoi can be found in the Bakhmetev archive at the University of Columbia, and has been published by A. Tiurin in Evgenii Zamiatin, 'Nezakonchennoe', Novyi zhurnal, 176, 1988, pp. 109-133 [pp. 124-126].

4See Strizhev, 'Vozvrashchenie Evgeniia Zamiatina', op. cit., p. 54. All subsequent references to Znamenie are taken from the Neimanis edition (I, 378-88).

5The IMLI catalogue indicates that a fragment from a story entitled Grad nezdesnii can be found on the reverse side of a draft version of the miniature prose piece, Bog - see IMLI, fond 47, opis' 1, ed. khr. 29. The draft version of Bog is provisionally dated 1916, but must have been written prior to the second version, which is dated 21 February 1916. See ibid., fond 47, opis' 1, ed. khr. 31. Monastyr', is preserved in the Bakhmetev Archive at the University of Columbia and has also been published by A. Tiurin - see Evgenii Zamiatin, 'Iz literaturnogo naslediia', Novyi zhurnal, 170, 1988, p. 77. The fragment is undated and there is no indication as to whether the individual items are published in strict chronological sequence. The imagery of Monastyr',
however, which I shall analyze in due course, indicates that it almost certainly predates *Znamenie*.

6 *Pravda istinniaia* (I, 288-89) was written on 14 July (Old Style) 1916 - see IMLI, fond 47, opis’ 1, ed. khr. 38. As Shane has noted (op. cit., p. 112), this story may reflect the new position Zamiatin found himself in thanks to the patronage of the Armstrong family, who ran the Newcastle shipyard where he was working at the time. It was not published until after his return to Russia in Gor’kii's journal, *Novaia zhizn ’*, 24 December 1917.

7 *Na ostrove*, in Evgenii Zamiatin, 'Nezakonchennoe', op. cit., pp. 120-21 [p. 121].

8 See, for example, the following fragments of his correspondence during the period April - June 1916 (dates given are Old Style):

'Takie u menia vse plokhie nastroeniia (....) ne zanimaius’, ni angliskim, ni literaturoi svoei’ (17 April); '(....) za poslednee vremia ia byl na odin millimetr ot togo, chtoby soblazniat’ vas Angliiei. Ele uzhe ele uderzhalsia (....) a voobshche skuchno, skuchno, Miliusha, neprokhodimo' (14 May); 'Ia zhivu bezgorestno i bezradostno, i chuvstvuiu, chto zatsvetaiu plesen’iu, kak letom stoichii prud. Pisat’ ne mogu....' (17 May); 'Tak pusty moi dni i nochi, kak v avguste zheltoe zhnanoe zhniv’e' (23 June). Zamiatin's last letter to Liudmila Nikolaevna is dated 6 August 1916, followed by two telegrams which inform her that he has received her last letter, dated 22 August 1916, and that he will meet her off the ship in Newcastle. See the Zamiatin archive in the RNB, fond 292, ed. khr. 6 (letters 4, 6, 8, 10).

9 The Kitezh legend describes how a holy city built by a Russian prince is miraculously saved by the hand of God and sinks to the bottom of a lake at the moment it faces annihilation at the hands of Tatar hordes. It is thought to date from the thirteenth century, but its written version exists in the form of a late eighteenth-century document compiled by Old Believer monks. Its relevance for *Znamenie* will be examined during the course of this chapter. This Old Believer document, entitled *Kniga glagolemaia letopisets* (but more popularly known as *Kniga glagolemaia kitezhskim letopistsem*), was first published in 1862 by Petr Bessonov in the supplements to the fourth section of his *Pesni sobrannye P.*


11Shane, op. cit., p. 132.


14See Shane, p. 162. Popular expressions in the text include *Rusal'naja* (378), which refers to the week leading up to Trinity Sunday, and the name of the main protagonist, Seliverst, rather than the Orthodox Sil'vestr.

15See Leech-Anspach, op. cit., p. 52.

16For Zamiatin's frequent pilgrimages with his mother to various monasteries in Russia during his youth, see A. Strizhev in 'Evgenii Zamjatin: "K razrusheniu ravnoesiia"', op. cit., p. 116 (footnote). For the political ramifications of canonizations during the reign of Nicholas II, especially that of Serafim of Sarov in 1903, see Robert L. Nichols, 'The Friends of God: Nicholas II and Alexandra at the Canonization of Serafim of Sarov, July 1903' in Charles E. Timberlake (ed.), *Religious and Secular Forces in Late Tsarist Russia*, Seattle & London, 1992, pp. 206-29.
According to Sreznevskii, the term shir'shii is the archaic comparative of the adjective shirokii. The Virgin Mary is frequently described in ecclesiastical texts as the 'Ruler of the Heavens' (Vladychitsa nebes), and two examples of the phrase shir'shaia nebes are cited from the menaea - see I. I. Sreznevskii, Materialy dlia slovaria drevnerusskogo iazyka, three volumes, vol. 3, St. Petersburg, 1903, col. 1594. Ultimately, the term probably derives from the Greek acathists, which use similar formulations in relation to the Mother of God's pallium, or cloak e.g. 'raduisia, Pokrove miru, shirshii oblaka.' Quoted in N. P. Kondakov, Ikonografiia Bogomateri, two volumes, vol. 2, St. Petersburg, 1915, p. 101. It is worth noting that a similar expression appears in the unfinished fragment, Sem's polovinoi: '-Akh ty, gore moe gor'koe, da chto zhe eto za stram takoi! Mat' Presviataia, shir'shaia nebesi, Pet-Pavel (....)' - this suggests that it might be a popular expression in a particular locality. See Evgenii Zamiatin, 'Nezakonchennoe', op. cit., p. 124.


For the cultural importance of Optina Pustyn' in nineteenth-century Russia, see Ziolkowski, op. cit., pp. 14-15.


After trying various extreme and violent remedies, St. Martinian (feast day, 13 February) eventually decided that the only way to overcome his lust was never to stop in any one place. See I. Kalinskii, Mesiatseslov, op. cit., pp. 95-96. See also the heroic struggle of St. John the Sufferer (feast day, 18 July), who, in order to control his lust, tried to starve himself and wore heavy chains, but was forced eventually to dig a hole in the ground in which he buried himself up to the neck, with only his head and hands above the earth. See ibid., pp. 145-46.
This is implicit in Arsiusha's initial reproach to Seliverst: ' - Ty kak zhe molish' sia-to, brat, a? Glazami-to prechistuiu proburavit' khochesh', a?' (379).

The Virgin Mary's cloak, celebrated on October 1st by the Orthodox Church, traditionally symbolizes her role as 'intercessor' (zastupnitsa) and 'protector' (pokrovitel' nitsa) of sinners at the Last Judgment. See Mifologicheskii slovar', op. cit., p. 340.

Sreznevskii gives the Latin equivalents lenocinium and adulterium - see Sreznevskii, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 117.

See, for example, St. Theodosius' advice to his pupils regarding the necessity of fasting in order to nullify sinful thoughts in the thirteenth-century Primary Chronicle: 'I esche nado vozderzhivat' sia ot obil' noi pishchi, ibo ot mnogoiadeniiia i pitiia bezmernogo vozrastaiut pomysly lukavye, ot vozrosshikh zhe pomysлов sluchaetsia grekh.' See Povest' vremennykh let, translated into modern Russian by D. Likhachev, Petrozavodsk, 1991, p. 124.


See Kalinskii, op. cit., p. 95.

For a discussion of the fire topos in Saints' Lives and Russian literature, see Ziolkowski, op. cit., p. 234.

Russkii narod schitaet Presviatuiu Bogoroditsu Neopalimuiu Kupinu okhranitel' nitseiui ot pozhara i molnii, i potomu v skazanii o sviatykh ei naznachaetsia osobaiia molitva v etikh sluchaiakh. Krome togo, na sluchai bedy ot ognia, v prostom bytu voditsia obychai khodit' krugom pylaishchego zdaniia s obrazom Bogoroditsy Neopalimoj Kupiny dlia togo, chtoby prekratit' skoree pozhar.' See Kalinskii, op. cit., p. 27. Archimandrite Nikifor traces this notion back to spiritual songs and the teachings of the early Christian fathers: 'Po ucheniiu ottsov Tserkvi i po tserkovnym pesnopeniiam, goriashchaia, no nesgoraemaia kupina v osobennosti proobrazovala Mater' Bozhiiu, Devu Bogoroditsu,
prebyvshuiu netlennoiu i po voploshchenii i po rozhdenii ot nee Syna Bozhiia.' See Bibleiskaia entsiklopediia, op. cit., p. 416.

31'Shla vsenoshchnaia, bednaia, budniaia. Redkie svechi - tsvety paporotnika v kupal' skuiu noch' .....' (379). According to Afanas'ev, the paporotnik, or fern-flower, was renowned for its 'fiery colour' (ognennyi tsvet) and its symbolic associations with lightning, flaming tongues of fire and the sun. According to the folk-religious tradition, it burst into brief and brilliant bloom only twice a year at night, so brightly that the ordinary eye was completely dazzled and all surrounding darkness temporarily dispelled. The two occasions on which it was rumoured to bloom were Easter Sunday and Midsummer Night's Eve (23 June). See A. Afanas'ev, Poeticheskie vozzreniia slavian na prirodu, op. cit., vol. 2, pp. 379-80.

32'A bystrye beseniata suetiatsia uzhe v sozednom korpuse, i tol'ko sverkaiut i sviristiat ikh vostren'kie rozovye iazyчки ' (386). My emphases.

33'Bil, gudel, seial ognennoe semia - sekundu tsveli zhadnye zharkie tsvety - i opadali v t' mu' (386). My emphases.

34'Bylo ot nikh spasenie tol'ko v krasnom krugu lampady, i gorela u Seliversta lampada den' i noch' ' (380).


36'(....) ni v kom ognia net, dukhom oskudela pustyn'. Starets Arsiusha? Da i to obomshal uzh, i aki dub trukhliavyi: pritronut' sia strashno' (381).

37'A sluzhih nynche v staroi tserkvi - eshche batijuasha Larivon v nei malivalsia - brevenchataia i takaia kakaia-to vrode startsa Arsiushi: laskovaia, kvelaia, k zemle prignulas', zatianulo mokhom brevna' (383).

38'''Ne prosto monakh molitsia. Uzh ne on li?'' (381).

39'See the entry under 'iurodstvo' in Polnyi pravoslavnyi slovar', op. cit., vol. 2, column 2394.

40'See Dal', III, p. 365.

For an account of St. Simion's life, see Zimanov's book on St. Simion, "Iuodvyi.


Lampi mentions a childhood memory of an 'obscene' iuod vyi among the pilgrims to his home town in Lebedian: 'Letnie krestnye khody (....). Brodzieche monakhi, chernichki, iuodivyi Vasiantikhrist, izrekaiushchii bozhestvennoe i maternoe vperemezhku.' See A: 1931, op. cit., p. 12.

Odnoi rukoi on popal na simeonovy zheleza: v'yal ruku v zheleznyi braslet vsei tiazhest'iu tela - no ne mog vynut' ruku' (387).

See 'Fedor Sologub' (IV, 151). Dal' (II, p. 538) gives nesytyi as a colloquial equivalent for nesytnyi, i.e. 'nesporyi v pishche, ne skoro ill ne nadolgo nasyshchayushchii'.

These songs were traditionally sung on Maundy Thursday (Chisty chetverg), which is the fourth day of Strastnaia nedelia - in other words, the week immediately preceding Easter. Zamiatin mentions these souls in connection with the anguished seekers in Sologub's prose fiction: 'Put etot - tragicheskii put' Agasfera, put' v Damask Sologubovskogo rytsaria Romual'da iz Tureni, put' tekh vechno nesytykh dush, o kotorykh poiut v chisty chetverg na strastnoi.' See 'Fedor Sologub' (IV, 151).


See Dal', I, p. 11.

'Tak, otche, alchu ia. Ogon'menja snedaet, nevozmozhnogo alchu....'(381).

See 'Skifi li?' (IV, 504).

It should also be noted that his appearance was viewed as a sign of bad luck, while his repentance and conversion would be beneficial for all humanity. See the entry under 'Agasfer', in *Mifologicheskii slovar'*, op. cit., p. 18.

Marie-France Rouart has an interesting discussion of this subject in 'Bienheureuse malédiction: Ahasvéros ou le temps de la révolte', which forms the second part of her *Le mythe du juif errant*, no place of publication given, 1988, pp. 111-88.

It is worth noting that Zamiatin uses the same paradigm in his 1922 article about the Serapion Brothers: 'Slonimskii tak zhe, kak Lunts - eshche ishchet sebia: on eshche v sostoianii Agasfernorn: p´esy, rasskazy voennye, groteski, sovremennyi byt.' See 'Serapionovy brat´ia' (IV, 532-36 [535]).

Anderson gives a list of seventeen characteristics which frequently apply to the fictional portrait of Ahasuerus from the seventeenth century to the present day; he notes, however, that: '(....) a given writer in a given land at a given time may and will depart from such a formula as that indicated by these seventeen points.' See Anderson, op. cit., p. 48. The 'piercing gaze' is a Romantic contribution - see ibid., pp. 177 & 179.

This is indicated by the angry words of the gatekeeper, Arsiusha: 'Ty kak zhe molish´sia-to, brat, a? Glazami-to prechistuiu proburavit´ khochesh´, a?' (379). My emphasis.

This is indicated on three occasions. The reader is told early on that Seliverst 'Molcha otdaval vstrechnym iz bratii poklon, i vse zapakhivalsia, toropilsia s GREADE}...v kel´iu...' (380). This is echoed again during the interview sequence when Seliverst appears before Father Vedenei: 'Molcha stoial Seliverst u dveri' (381). Finally, there are the words of the monks themselves, relayed indirectly by the pilgrims: 'I s nami ni s kem ne razgовариает: kuda uzh emu s nami, greshnymi....' (382).

'Zmii vvergal v rot emu ognennuiu reku, i vse shire toshchii razinal rot, bez kontsa pogloshchaia ogon´...' (381). My emphasis.

The most celebrated description of the Last Judgment occurs in the Gospel according to St. Matthew, chapter 25, verses 31-46, where it is preceded by Christ's prediction of the end of the world
and his disciples' desire for a sign of his return in chapter 24, verses 3-32.

It is almost certainly a coincidence, but Zamiatin's story echoes closely one of the earlier literary adaptations of the legend in Great Britain. In The Wandering Jew: Or the Travels and Observations of Hareach the Prolonged (1820), an early Romantic treatment by a friend of Lord Byron's, John Galt (masquerading under the pseudonym of 'the Reverend T. Clark'), the Jew arrives at a Greek monastery on the slopes of Mount Athos. Surly, unsociable and highly irreligious, he cannot be persuaded to pay attention to the orderly life of the monastery, and in fact is suddenly overcome by an acute attack of demoniacal hysteria which leaves him with 'the pale and haggard look of a man exhausted by a great struggle.' He 'dies' and is buried, but his body disappears during the night. See Anderson, op. cit., pp. 148-49.

The adjective shir'shaia derives from the Greek comparative adjective meaning 'wider': platutera. Indeed, in all likelihood the icon in Znamenie conforms to the early Byzantine 'Virgin Platytera' or 'Orans' type. Judging by Bulgarian icons with identical titles, this depicts the Virgin Mary in her pallium with her hands stretched upwards towards the sky and Jesus Emmanuel depicted in front of her chest. See G. Gerkov, P. Penkova, P. Bozhnikov (eds.), Stenopisite na Rozhenskiia Manastir, Sofia, 1993, p. 9. The expression Shir'shaia nebes is rare in Russian, however, and the Bulgarian icon type is better known in Russia as the 'Znamenie', or 'Velikaia Panagiia', which announces the forthcoming birth of Christ and has a circular image of Jesus Emmanuel hanging like a medallion in front of the Virgin's chest. A Novgorod version of this icon was venerated after the city was saved miraculously from besieging forces in 1170. The icon type was believed at the time to have been the palladium of the city of Constantinople after the miraculous vision of St. Andrew, a Holy Fool 'for the sake of Christ', which took place in the church of Blachernae in the mid-tenth century. According to his Life, the Virgin Mary appeared to him in the temple during a long-
standing siege of the city by marauding Saracens: she was seen praying for peace and spreading her cloak or *pallium* over the Christian defenders of the city. Their subsequent miraculous survival gave rise to the whole *topos* of the Virgin Mary as 'intercessor' and 'protectress' of besieged cities and nations; indeed, it is this event which gave rise to the cult of the Virgin's *pallium* in Russia and the feast-day of Pokrov on the first of October. See Kondakov, op. cit., pp. 60-123. As the son of a priest whose church was dedicated to the *pokrov* of the Virgin Mary, it is impossible that Zamiatin was unaware of the cloak's symbolism.


Both Remizov and Voloshin used the city of Kitezh as a metaphor for Kievan Russia's 'disappearing from view' in the face of revolutionary chaos and violence: 'Ni Sergiev, ni Optina, ni Sarov/Narodnyi ne uimut koster./Oni uidut, spasaiaas' ot pozharov,/Na dno serebrianykh ozer./Tak, otdannaia na potok tataram,/Sviataia Kievskaiia Rus'//Ushla s zemli, ukryvshis' Svietoiarom./No ot ognia ne otrekus' /la sam-ogon'. Miatezh v moei prirod'. See Voloshin, *Kitezh*, op. cit., p. 235. Remizov refers to Kitezh as follows: 'A pro staroe, pro byvaloe - zabud'. Ty ves' Kitezh izvodi setiami - pusto ozero, nichego ne naiti'. See *Slovo o pogibeli Russkoi Zemli*, op. cit., p. 20. For a recent example of the city of Kitezh as a metaphor for internal emigration during the years of Stalinist repression, see V. Turbin, 'Kitezhane. Iz zapisok russkogo intelligenta', in T. A Notkina (ed.), *Pogruzhenie v triasinu*, Moscow, 1991, pp. 346-70.
See the self-contained chapter in the chronicle entitled *Povest' i vzyskanie o grade sokrovennom Kitezhe*, which Komarovich speculates is the work of Old Believer monks whose monastery was later destroyed by Archbishop Pitirim in the early eighteenth century. He contends that these monks later joined the sect of *beguny*, or *stranniki*, and took copies of the Kitezh Chronicle with them. See Komarovich, *Kitezhskaia legenda*, op. cit., pp. 23-48.

Ibid., pp. 5-22.


'Predan'ia o Batyevom razgrome tam svezhi. Ukazhut i "tropu Batyevu" i mesto nevidimogo grada Kitezha na ozere Svetlom lare. Tsel tot gorod do sikh por - s belokamennymi stenami, zlatoverkhimi tserkvami, s chestnymi monastyriami, s kniazhenetskimi uzorchatymi teremami, s boiar'skimi kamennymi palatami, s rublennymi iz kondovoogo, negniushchego lesa domami. Tsel grad, no nevidim. Ne vidat' greshnym liudiam slavnogo Kitezha. Skrylsia on chudesno, bozh'im povelen'em (....). I dosel tot grad nevidim stoit - otkroetsia pered strashnym Khristovym sud'ishchem. A na ozere Svetlom lare, tikhim letnim vecherom, vidneiutsia otrazhennye v vode steny, tserkvi, monastyri, terema kniazhenetskie, khoromy boiar'skie, dvory posadskikh liudei. I slyshitsia po nocham glukhoi, zaunyvnyi zvon kolokolov.' See Mel'nikov-Pecherskii, *V lesakh*, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 5.

Unable to find Bel'skii's libretto in the original Russian, I have been forced to rely on an extremely poor English translation of the French and German version of the opera, originally published by M. P. Belaev in Leipzig, 1926. See M. Nederlander, *Kitezh*, London, 1991, pp. 25-89.

Prishvin's original title was 'U sten grada nevidimogo' (see footnote 10 of the present chapter); the *vzyskuemyi grad* is discussed in Korolenko's 'Svetloiar', op. cit., p. 132; and Voloshin writes: 'Kuda zovet prizyvnyi i nezdeshnii/ Podvodnyi blagovest tserkvi.' See *Kitezh*, op. cit., p. 235.
'Itak nad ozerom Svetloiarom stoiat dva mira: odin - nastoiashchii, no nevidimyi, drugoi - vidimyi, no nenastoiashchii. I spletaiutsia drug s drugom, pokryvaiut i pronikaiut drug v druga.' See Korolenko, op. cit., p. 131.

Mel'nikov-Pecherskii, for instance, wove into the fabric of his novel eye-witness accounts of the celebrations which used to take place on the Eve of St. John. At one point he describes how fragments of the Kitezh Chronicle are read out aloud to the pilgrims by local monks, probably beguny or stranniki. This gives rise to tales among the assembled pilgrims about people who have mysteriously found themselves at the gates of a monastery which subsequently turned out to be the entrance to the invisible city itself. See Mel'nikov-Pecherskii, V lesakh, vol. 2, pp. 295-99. Korolenko, moreover, reports a tale told to him by a local fisherman. This man tells him a story from his youth about an Old Believer who claims one day to have been blessed by a vision of the holy city and to have been able to hear its bells tolling at the bottom of the lake. Interpreting this as a sign that he is soon to be summoned there, he stops eating and drinking and sells his bee-hives, his hut and all his worldly belongings. The fisherman claims to have seen the old man later in the presence of two mysterious monks, and the next day he simply disappears. It is rumoured in the local village that he was later seen in a boat in the middle of the lake with these two monks, and the fisherman believes that he was being taken to Kitezh: 'Na dne tozhe samoe monastyr', he says, 'I na samoi seredke glavny vorota.' See Korolenko, op. cit., pp. 137-40.


See Uezdnoe (I, 72). This passage will be discussed in greater detail in due course.

'Na nizen'kom lugu, p' iushchem vodu iz Volgi - strannyi, ves' iarko-belyi, nezdeshtii, nezemnoi gorodok. I poiut na uslady vsemu miru - kolokola: tikhim, nizkim, glubokim, umirovorennym zvonom, budto ne zdes', naverkhu, a pod vodoi,
v nevidimom grade etot zvon, proshel cherez dremotno-zelenuiu
glub', ottogo takoi tishinoi, takim mirom polon' (my emphases).
See Monastyr', op. cit., p. 77.

The adjective malinovyi (ibid., p. 77), which Zamiatin adopts to
describe the pealing bells, echoes Mel'nikov-Pecherskii: '(...)
gusto zvon, malinovyi - vek slushai, ne naslshaesh' sia...' See V
lesakh, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 302. 'Malinovyi zvon' is also the subtitle
of Rimskii-Korsakov's opera on the subject of Kitezh. See
Danilevich, op. cit., p. 174.

See Bol'shoi vsem mirnyi nas to l'n y i atlas Marksa, St.
Petersburg, 1905, illustration nos. 20 & 21.

For the argument that authorship of the Kitezh Chronicle
should be attributed to the beguny ('runners') or stranniki
('wanderers'), see Komarovich, op. cit., pp. 39-41.

Stranniki, bogomolki vsegda iudhs' v dome, i ikh razgovory,
rech', manery voshli potom v splav zamiatinskoi prozy.' See
Strizhev's footnote 'Evgenii Zamiatin:"k razrusheniui ravnovesia"',
op. cit., p. 116. In one of Zamiatin's autobiographies, these
stranniki are described as 'brodiachie monakhi'. See A: 1931, op.
cit., p. 12.

Compare the sentence: 'grebeshki iz Iaroslavlia, prianiki
kineshemskie, krasnye s zolotom, iskusnye baklushi iz Dieva
Gorodishcha', which appears in Monastyr' (op. cit., p. 77), with
'grebenki, prianiki, krasnye baklushi' in Znamenie (I, 383). It
might be worth mentioning that the blocks of wood from which
these artefacts were made hailed originally from the same county
as Lake Svetloiar. See the entry under 'baklusha' given in

'Tam tishina i pokoi, veselie i radost' (....) Dukhovnaia radost',
ne telesnaia.' See V lesakh, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 300. This can be
compared with the opening passage of Znamenie: 'I tak khorosho,
tikho zhit' otdeleennyom ot mira zelenoi glub' iu (....) i vsem vmeste
vstreit' radostno Krasniuiu Paskhu' (378).

Prishvin uses the word skazochnyi in relation to Kitezh in
'Svetloe ozero', op. cit., p. 426.

The passage continues thus: 'A pushchay b' iut. Tak u nas na
etot schet govarivali: - Eto uzh pust' sebe oni tam v Vavilonakh s
The *Povest' i vzyskanie o grade sokrovennom Kitezhe* features in the work of all three writers, although it is universally recognised as an Old Believer fiction. In part four, chapter two of *V lesakh*, the fictional character, Vasilii Borisich, confronts the elderly monk reading excerpts from the *Povest'* and corrects him on a point of historical accuracy. See *V lesakh*, vol. 2, pp. 289-90. Korolenko was similarly sceptical of the truth of the legend: 'Est' chto-to umilitel'noe dla nas v etoi legende.... Mnogie i iz nas, davno pokinuvshikh tropy starodavnego Kitezha, otoshedshikh i ot takoi very i takoi molitvy, - vse-taki ishchut tak zhe strastno svoego "grada vzyskuemogo". I dazhe poroi slyshat prizyvnuye zvony. I, ochnuvshis', vidiat sebia opiat' v glukhom lesu, a krugom kholmy, kochki da bolota...' See Korolenko, op. cit., p. 132.

Prishvin meets a local scholar having in the village of Shadrino, only two versts away from the lake, who presents to him a copy of the Kitezh Chronicle and also informs him that the legend is historically inaccurate. See Prishvin, op. cit., pp. 429-30.

The fact that Batu Khan razed the city to the ground is mentioned in the original chronicle: 'I posle togo razorennia zapusteli goroda te, malyi Kitezh, chto na beregu Volgi stoit, i Bol'shoi, chto na beregu ozera Svetloiar.' See 'Legenda o grade Kitezhe', op. cit., p. 219. It may be worth mentioning in this context that in Act III, Scene I of Rimskii-Korsakov's opera, the people of Kitezh invoke the cloak of the Mother of God in order to save them from annihilation. See Nederlander, op. cit., p. 58.

It is interesting that the Kitezh chronicle actually uses this word in connection with historical upheavels generally: 'I se grad Bol'shoi Kitezhe nevidim stal i oberegaem rukoiu Bozhieiu, - tak pod konets veka nashego mnogomiatezhnogo i slez dostoinogo pokryl Gospod' tot grad dlaniiu svoei.' See 'Legenda o grade Kitezhe', op. cit., p. 225.

'I bylo y nikh v glazakh takoe krepkoe, neodolimoe, katilo na Seliversta (...) i znal on tverdo: nevozmozhno - vozmozhno, i chuial: blizko uzhe, i nichego ne bylo strashno' (383).
'Последний раз огляднулся Seliverst: чтобы кругом глаза.
Zacherpnul ottuda - из глаз, неистовая волна кхлестнула снизу, от сердца - к рукам' (386).

'Мы замечаем, как внимательно освещали эти глаза в ранней описи иконы: 'Икона древняя, явленная - одни глаза, громадные,....' (379).

'В одном из писем к своей жене, от 9 апреля 1906 года, Zamatin сравнивает революцию с впечатлением впала в волнах мощной волны: 'Волна огромная, мутно-зеленая, перекинулась по белой ткани, медленно, все ближе, ближе - и вдруг скатилась в свои могучие области, выбросила, скрутила, несет.' См. письма Zamatin'a к своей жене в RNB, фонд 292, ed. khr. 4, [p. 4]. Сравните с Znamenie: 'И было у них в глазах такое крепкое, неотступное, катило на Seliversta, как морская волна, взметывало его вверх...' (383).


'Участие E. Zamatin'a в демократическом движении в период революции 1905 года, его атеизм доставили немало горьких минут оттуда. Упреки горожан и церковного начальства, с одной стороны, и твердое убеждение в неврастении синего, отвергшего предание i

255
patriarkhal'nuu zhizn' - s drugoi, okrasili v kholodnye tona
dal' neishee obschchenie mezhdu otsom i synom.' See the note by
Strizhev in 'Evgenii Zamiatin: "k razrusheniu ravnovesia', op. cit.,
p. 115.
96 For information regarding Ivan Dmitrievich's death, see ibid.
97 "Tiazhelo zhit', "skuchno bez dela, bez zhizni", "nichego net v
dushe - ni energii, ni mysli: pusto tam, kak v vymershem dome
(...)." Cited in Liubimova, op. cit., p. 101. Zamiatin also refers to
this period in this 1929 autobiography as follows: 'Lebedianskuiu
tishinu, kolokola, palisadniki - vyderzhal nedolgo: uzhe letom -
bez propiski v Peterburge, potom - v Gel'singforse.' See A: 1929
(I, 29).
98 'Sem'ia razrushaetsia, obvalivaiutsia krasivye pristroiki,
ostaiutsia odni golye, starye pustye steny.' Liubimova draws
attention especially to the conflict between the father and the
two children, i.e. Zamiatin and his sister, Aleksandra. See
99 See ibid., p. 102.
100 See A: 1929 (I, 29).
101 Shane, op. cit., p. 11.
102 See Horst Lampl, 'Altrussisch-kirchenslavische Stilisierung bei
Remizov und Zamjatin' in Wiener Slavistisches Jahrbuch, 1975,
pp. 131-45.
103 See E. J. Brown, op. cit., p. 36.
CHAPTER FIVE

The chudesa, or 'miracle stories'

Introduction

The three Zamiatin short stories entitled O sviatom grekhe Zenitsy devy. Slovo pokhval’noe (1917), O tom, kak istselen byl inok Erazm (1922) and O chude, proissishedshem v Pepel’nuiu Sredu (1926) have only recently been grouped together under the collective title chudesa or 'stories of the miraculous'.¹ This classification, from the generic point of view, is an interesting one. In sacred writing, the term chudo refers to an account of a miracle performed by a holy figure of the Orthodox Church which may appear as a fragment of a larger text, or as an individual text in its own right - thus it belongs formally to the loose and amorphous tradition of hagiographic writing which takes as its subject the lives of saints.² Since, however, these three stories assume the guises of hagiographic narratives only to subvert their sacred messages, it would be better to define them as mock-hagiographic, or parodies in the hagiographic style - in other words, as 'miracle stories' in inverted commas. As we will see, while they borrow the stock themes (topoi) of the Lives genre and often imitate their archaic language, spelling and syntax, they also recast these themes in a new light and satirize the dual elements of laudation and edification which constitute the didactic thrust of the standard hagiographic narrative.³ In essence, Zamiatin's narratives are counterfeit texts, neo-fabulist
forgeries whose *jouissance*, to borrow from Barthes, consists of gradually stripping away the impression of authenticity to reveal the underlying burlesque and carnival-like intent. Furthermore, as I hope to demonstrate, it is not only the moral dogmas of Church which constitute their primary target. These are allegories aimed at the world of modern politics and culture, allegories which don the mask of the medieval chronicler as a screening device with which to smuggle subversive messages on contemporary themes. In this respect, they closely resemble other coded texts in Zamiatin's fiction, such as the tales collected together in *Bol'shimi detiam skazki*, which exploit Biblical themes as a modern polemical weapon.

As Margaret Ziolkowski has observed, the use of saints' *Lives* as literary sources enjoyed something of a vogue in the latter half of the nineteenth century, attracting writers as stylistically diverse as Fedor Dostoevskii, Lev Tolstoi, Nikolai Leskov, Aleksei Tolstoi, Vsevolod Garshin and Dmitrii Merezhkovskii, to name but a few. On the whole, these authors seemed concerned more with the value of the Christian message contained within the *Lives*, and their relevance for modern-day humanity, than with their literary form or style. It was common to borrow individual episodes from well-known *zhitiia*, to model fictional characters on celebrated saintly types, to adapt a particular *zhitie* for a modern, secular audience, and to rework entire narratives for polemical, often anti-ecclesiastical purposes. It is rare, on the other hand, to find these authors imitating the style and lexicon of their hagiographic source material. The stock themes are often transferred unmodified to a contemporary setting, and the
language remains recognizably modern, even in those cases where the action of the narrative takes place in antiquity, such as Leskov's adaptations of the Russian... It is only at the beginning of the twentieth century that this purely thematic emphasis undergoes radical revision. In Aleksei Remizov's works, such as Limonar' (1907), Paralipomenon (1912) and Tsep' zlataia (1913), an attempt is made to infiltrate the language of Old Russian and Church Slavonic texts into the fabric of modern Russian.8 Remizov's experiments in the field of medieval stylization, and in particular his pornographic, anti-clerical tale, Chto est' tabak , which first appeared in 1908, are rightly regarded as influential precursors for Zamiatin.9 It is known, for example, that the two writers were collaborating closely when Zenitsa-deva itself came to be written, and there is evidence that Remizov was entrusted with the story's publication while Zamiatin was abroad in Great Britain.10 Even so, there are major differences in the way these writers approach their ecclesiastical material, differences which not only define them as writers with different poetic inclinations, but also illustrate their respective attitudes towards Russia's Orthodox heritage.

In common with their experiments in skaz-style narrative language, the historical stylizations of Remizov and Zamiatin constitute a novel form of ostranenie . As Horst Lampl has convincingly argued, by incorporating anachronistic linguistic forms into their narratives they not only present their reader with an exotic and novel aesthetic, but actually expand the linguistic norms of modern Russian, if not rupture them altogether; through their very 'method of representation', it might
be said, these texts possess an aesthetic value when considered against the background of the conventional literary norm: Realism. Lampl defines this 'value' in terms of the primitive, presumably in the sense that a non-modern, imaginative worldview and sensibility is being conveyed. He compares the stylizations of Remizov and Zamiatin with the so-called New Romantic Movement as illustrated by the paintings of Rerikh, Nesterov and Bilibin; moreover, it is worth comparing this type of reworking of ecclesiastical materials with Larionov and Goncharova's use of icon painting techniques in their neo-primitivist works. Certainly, it was within this broad cultural context that Boris Eikhenbaum classified the poetic adaptation of Saints' Lives (zhitiia) and ancient chronicles (letopisi) in terms of 'literary populism'. Modern hagiographic scholars also view their subject as a popular literary genre, especially in those instances, such as the Greek and Russian synaxarion, where the text was designed to be read aloud during church services. It has been suggested that the legends of the saints are basically 'spiritual fables' intended to delight the 'simple-minded' and fill them with 'awe and reverence'. The Bollandist scholar, Father Hippolyte Delehaye, even goes as far as to claim that these 'fables' were shaped indirectly by the very people themselves. 'Behind the ultimate author who puts them down in writing,' he writes, 'there is a hidden "author", anonymous and manifold, whose memory stretches back through generations: this "author" is the masses, the people themselves.' In terms of style and content, it is common to regard the Lives as fictional enterprises whose blend of myth, folklore and legend bears comparison with the historical novel. Thus Remizov and Zamiatin's prose stylizations employ
materials which are themselves fictional and deeply rooted in the popular imagination. In this context, it is interesting to note that cheap and accessible versions of Saints' Lives, many of them now classified as lubok literature, were beginning to be distributed in the countryside and sold at markets and fairs with great success at the turn of the century. It would be an error, therefore, to assume that the intended readership of these modern stylizations was necessarily 'élite' or 'intellectual', even if censorship and publishing restrictions before and after 1917 ultimately made this inevitable. These tales are rooted in a popular genre, the stock themes and satirical manipulation of which would have been easily recognizable, both for the literate and the non-literate public alike.

Zamiatin was extremely well acquainted with the imaginative world of the Orthodox Church. As mentioned in the introductory chapter, his father was a priest at a local church in Lebedian', his mother was the daughter of a priest, and as a young boy he accompanied his family on pilgrimages to the shrines of St. Serafim of Sarov, St. Mitrofan of Voronezh and St. Tikhon of Zadonsk, all of them celebrated figures in the history of the Orthodox Church. Zamiatin was plainly familiar with a fair amount of ecclesiastical literature, although there is no evidence that he was a scriptural expert in the Remizov mould. In Oiazyke' he listed a number of monuments (pamiatniki) with which, in his view, the modern writer should be familiar: apocryphal tales, the acathists, and the chet'imeini (readings from the Lives of Saints, arranged according to the calendar month). All of them, in order to be properly useful, should be
read in the original. He compared the Church Slavonic monuments of Orthodox and Old Believer scholarship, drawing attention to the purging of 'impious' and extravagantly 'miraculous' episodes from church books and menology collections under Peter the Great, a phenomenon which he blamed on the positivist spirit prevailing at the time. This can only refer to Dmitrii of Rostov's *Reading Menaea*, compiled in the latter half of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century on the basis of Western non-Russian sources. Elsewhere in his critical prose references can be found to the *topos* of carnal temptation and the 'psychology of demonism' in the *Reading Menaea*, an important indication of his familiarity with the *Lives* of confessor and hermit saints. There is also the humorous comparison drawn between the painter Boris Kustodiev, incapacitated at the end of his life by illness, and a number of Russian saints supposedly celebrated for their 'vows of immobility'. It should be remembered that Zamiatin himself was an influential figure behind the formation of the Serapion Brothers, a group of aspiring writers in the early 1920s who attended his lectures on the techniques of creative writing and modelled themselves on the 'hermit Serapion' from E. T. A. Hoffmann's *The Serapion Brethren*.

The chief difference between Remizov and Zamiatin, however, lies in their conflicting ideological attitude towards the body of ecclesiastical material at their disposal. Remizov, although occasionally betraying anti-clerical tendencies, is largely celebratory in his treatment of these sources, whereas Zamiatin is unashamedly and persistently subversive. Lampl argues that the
comic effect of Zamiatin's tales lies in the absurd contrast and disparity between the supposedly elevated genre and the usually obscene content. Another commentator has suggested that Zamiatin was a sceptic by nature who doubted the eternal truths of Orthodox Christianity while admiring its 'historical forms'. There is much truth in these observations. Zamiatin's self-styled heresy, a guiding artistic and philosophical principle after the establishment of Soviet rule, was as much the product of his hostility towards the dogmas of the Church, which he considered moribund in the modern era, as towards the revolutionary dogmas of the Bolsheviks, whom he considered similar in tendency. His tales mock not only the very tradition of hagiographic writing, but also the saints, their spiritual achievements, and the popular fantasy which is part and parcel of the fabrication of their legends. They are obscene in the sense that they insert vulgar sexuality and eroticism into what is traditionally regarded as a puritanical and prudish mode of discourse; they are also blasphemous in the sense that they ridicule the sacred objects of Christian veneration. It would be a mistake, however, to ignore their own special brand of spirituality. Zamiatin's joyous celebration of sexuality, and his hostility towards the promotion of celibacy and virginity as spiritual ideals, are not nearly as crude as Remizov's Chto est' tabak. On the contrary, the importance he attached to the mystery of sexual passion to a certain extent recalls the theories of Rozanov and Solov' ev concerning the divine origins of sexual love. As witnessed in the opening chapter of Lovets chelovekov, where the voyeuristic organist Bailey stands in front of a shop window full of shoes and thanks the Lord for everything in His
divine creation, even the 'pain' of love, Zamiatin's attitude towards sexuality, if not entirely Orthodox, was life-enhancing, exuberant and almost mystical. As the blessed Pamva says at the end of *Inok Erazm*: 'Idite s mirom, ibo nichto v mire ne tvoritsia bez izvoleniia Tvorca, dazhe i grekh, i vse ko blagu' (I, 474).

*O sviatom grekhe Zenitsy devy. Slovo pokhval'noe*

Although *Zenitsa-deva* was first published in the Right SR newspaper, *Delonaroda*, just two days before the storming of the Winter Palace, it has recently become apparent that the text itself must have originated much earlier.31 A letter from Zamiatin to Remizov dated 22 April (Old Style) 1916, which inquires about the possibility of placing the story for publication, suggests that it must have been written at some unspecified time before his departure to England, that is to say, March 1916 at the very latest.32 Very probably on the basis of this evidence, the compiler of a recent Russian edition of Zamiatin's works, Aleksandr Galushkin, has dated the story from 1916 (intriguingly, this edition offers a slightly different version of the text from that published in Neimanis).33 Sadly, recourse to the Zamiatin archive at IMLI does nothing to resolve the enigma: four draft versions of the text have survived, all with slightly different titles, but the archivists themselves appear to be in a quandary as to when the manuscripts were written.34 Until further information becomes available, therefore, it would seem that early 1916 is the most accurate date possible.
Zenitsa-deva is the first story in which Zamiatin deliberately parodies an anachronistic literary style. In his lectures on language at the House of Arts he described it as an 'experimental work' in which he had tried to create, through stylization, the 'illusion' of an early medieval narrative. German scholars have pointed to old church chronicles as literary sources - in particular, the thirteenth-century Primary Chronicle, Russia's earliest annalistic composition, the opening fragments of which are famously parodied in Saltykov-Shchedrin's Istoriia odnogo goroda. There can be little doubt that the elevated style and archaic vocabulary, as well as the stylized syntax and Church-Slavonic spelling, make this hypothesis a highly attractive one. The Slavic, Gothic and Finnish tribes mentioned in the tale - the Drevlianians, Dulebians, Polianians, Merians, Vesians, Radimichians, Severianians, Goths and Chudians, all of them pagan - date the nominal time of the action at least prior to the conversion of Vladimir the Great, and therefore well within the Primary Chronicle's chronological framework. Nevertheless, it should be pointed out that the Gothic invasion described in Zenitsa-deva might well be modelled on a historical event belonging to a period well before the Primary Chronicle begins its narration proper. Two fictional characters in the story - Ulfil, the wandering wonder-worker, and King Erman, the ferocious warlord - would appear to have been based on real historical personages existing in the fourth century; while the Gothic empire which is described stretching from the Sea of Azov (Surozhskoe more) all the way to the Baltic Sea (Variazhskoe more) existed in this form at roughly the same time. Neither of
these characters, nor the cataclysmic event itself, are actually 
mentioned in the Primary Chronicle as such.

There is a further problem from the point of view of literary 
genre. The Primary Chronicle, while certainly an example of 
sacred writing, is not a hagiographic composition in the strict 
sense of the word, although it does incorporate stock hagiographic 
elements where the narrative concerns certain saintly figures (see, for example, the fragments which constitute the legend of St. 
O’lga, Orthodox Russia's first female saint). The title of Zamiatin's 
tale, on the other hand, alludes to a brand of composition which is 
more strictly hagiographic in character. In the history of the early 
church, the eulogy (slovopokhval'noe) was a traditional way of 
celebrating the anniversary of a martyr's death, and performed 
an important function in the process whereby the fame of a 
martyr venerated locally and associated in the popular memory 
with acts of heroism and events of a miraculous nature could be 
spread more widely outside the immediate vicinity, leading 
eventually to canonization. Interestingly, the four draft 
versions of Zenitsa-deva show Zamiatin toying with several 
variations on this title, all of them hagiographic in resonance. The 
first, Slovo pokhval'noe mnikha nevedomogo o grekhe sviatom 
Zenitsy devy, presents the reader with a 'found document' of 
unofficial provenance, an intriguing conceit which would have 
lent the story an unorthodox flavour, while at the same time 
preserving an aura of respectability. The second, Zhitie i 
konchina sviataia Zenitsy-devy, is orthodox and directly 
evocative of the vita genre. The third, Slovo pokhval'noe o 
grekhe sviatom Zenitsy devy, presumably supplied the basis for
his final choice. While the fourth, simply *Zenitsa deva*, may possibly have been the version mentioned in the letter to Remizov.\textsuperscript{42} As we shall see, while *Zenitsa-deva* bears clear resemblances to the kind of miracle story recounted every so often in the *Primary Chronicle*, its formal elements and content betray far more the influence of the early martyrologies, in particular the 'passions' (*passiones*) of the holy virgin-martyrs. In addition, while this type of composition and thematic focus undeniably provide the skeletal structure of Zamiatin's parody, he has incorporated other elements deriving from folklore and the Bible. It has been suggested, for example, that the theme of war and virtuous self-sacrifice in *Zenitsa-deva* is a travesty of the apocryphal *Judith*, an Old Testament fable in which a saintly female 'warrior' confronts an evil oppressor and saves her fellow countrymen from military disaster.\textsuperscript{43} There are strong indications, moreover, that Zamiatin intended his story as an allegorical satire directed towards contemporary political events. This thesis will examine all these aspects of the story and attempt to assess their significance in the light of his folk-religious impersonations.

*Zenitsa-deva* essentially tells the story of a beautiful young Radimichian girl who decides to sacrifice her virginity in order to save her country from ruthless oppression. The first episode in the life of the Precious Virgin witnesses a miraculous healing. While drinking a bowl of 'pure' water from her father's cistern, she accidentally swallows a tiny serpent which subsequently swells up inside her stomach and gives her the appearance of being pregnant. After unsuccessful attempts by the local sages to
rid her of the serpent, the girl turns to Ulfil, a Gothic miracle-worker who claims not to worship either the Slavic or Gothic gods, but a 'God' of his own. Yet, with a 'sign' which no-one recognizes, he succeeds in banishing the beast and healing the girl, both physically and spiritually. The young virgin is sufficiently impressed by Ulfil's miraculous powers to adopt his faith, devoting her life to the poor and needy and leading a life of chastity. True to the nature of this faith, when the land is invaded by the barbaric King Erman, her first thoughts are with the young women taken prisoner and subjected to heinous tortures by his hot-blooded warriors. Seeking Erman in person, she offers her body in exchange for a cessation of brutalities, and for thirty days this strategy seems to work. Erman, however, falls obsessively in love with his young concubine and soon becomes frustrated by her mechanical response to his ardour: 'Telo moe, esli khochesh', mozhesh' vziat', ibo ono est' tlen, dushu zhe - net, skverennik: dusha nerastlenna est', ' she responds coolly (67). Cruelly rebuffed, Erman subjects her to terrible tortures and imprisons her in the cistern from which she first contracted her mysterious illness. For three days and nights she prays for heavenly intervention, during which time earthquakes and storms ravage the country and the invading Goths are forced to flee. It is recorded that her terrible wounds miraculously heal all by themselves, and that she dies in old age, revered and honoured by a grateful nation.

Readers familiar with the Lives of female saints will notice several conventional topoi in relation to the young heroine's life and death. The claim that the Precious Virgin's body does not
decay after she has passed away, but retains a sweet-smelling fragrance and heavenly radiance, is a stock theme of the genre and an important litmus-test of sanctity as far as the Russian Orthodox Church was concerned historically. Likewise, the revelation that her body heals miraculously after torture (the poor woman's severed breasts allude unquestionably to the gruesome fate of the third-century, Italian martyr saint, St. Agatha) is also a commonplace of the virgin-martyr legends. On closer inspection, it becomes apparent that Zamiatin has indeed modelled his tale on the passio, a specific type of legend in which the earliest hagiographic sub-genre records the deaths of which reward the deaths of female martyrs who choose to die rather than renounce their religion during the terrible persecutions of the second and third centuries. As several scholars have noted, the passio follows a set pattern: the virgin martyr (in Russian, velikomuchenitsa) is from a rich and noble background; she is young, beautiful, eloquent, and capable of outwitting her persecutors in verbal exchanges; her decision to convert to Christianity is taken in defiance of her parents and the local Roman authorities and frequently involves the rejection of wealthy suitors and their proposals of marriage; her conversion takes the form of vows of celibacy and/or working with the poor and persecuted; the virgin finds herself on trial for her beliefs, the climax of the legend consisting of a dramatic confrontation with her official persecutor during which she steadfastly refuses to renounce her beliefs; she is subjected to appalling tortures, but remains either impervious physically or her wounds miraculously heal by themselves; natural catastrophes, such as earthquakes and lightning, subsequently occur as punishment for her tormentors; finally, the young woman dies without having
renounced her celibacy, further miracles being observed at her graveside and associated with her relics.\textsuperscript{47}

Ignoring for a moment the four junctures at which the text departs from the passio - the pregnancy episode, the theme of war and self-sacrifice, the decision of the Precious Virgin to compromise her purity for the sake of others, and the fact that she does not actually die a martyr's death - it can be seen that the skeletal structure of Zenitsa-deva accords closely to this pattern. The opening paragraph, which announces that the essence of womanhood is 'martyrdom' or 'suffering' (muchenie [64]) establishes a passio-type expectation on the part of the reader. The circumstances and physical features of the Precious Virgin also strongly resemble those of the virgin-martyrs of early Christian legend. She is 'young and beautiful' ('mlada i preskrasna' [64]). She is born with an angelic countenance, her hair being said to consist of a golden 'corona' or 'halo' (64).\textsuperscript{48} Her parents are of noble stock, her father possessing horses, slaves and 'a multitude of priceless pearls' ('bisera mnogo bestsennogo' [64]). She converts to Christianity in her youth (we presume Ulfil's 'unknown sign' is that of the cross). She devotes her youth to the poor and needy, at the same time rejecting the attentions of her wealthy suitors - 'Ubogikh nevesta ia, no ne vasha!' she tells them when they arrive one morning at her parents' house (65). She remains a virgin for five years until the beginning of the Gothic invasion, after which Erman makes a point of reminding her about her earlier vows of celibacy.\textsuperscript{49} She is tortured by an angry tyrant for refusing to submit to his wishes, after which her wounds miraculously heal by themselves (66).
Earthquakes and terrible thunderstorms explode as a result of her constant prayer, causing her tormentors to flee (67). She dies, as I have already noted, with her body retaining its sweet-smelling fragrance (67). Finally, she is publicly venerated on her death-bed, even the epitaph on her grave-stone - 'Zdes' pogrebena est' Zenitsa-deva, siia grekhom miloserdnym nas spasla est' (67) - is reminiscent of St. Agatha's as recorded in de Voragine's *Golden Legend*: 'Saintly and generous soul, an honour to God and the saviour of her country'.

The anonymous narrator of *Zenitsa-deva* evidently wishes to attribute all the vestiges of saintliness to his Precious Virgin; and in this respect, the narrative exudes all the proper ecclesiastical decorum. Elsewhere in the text, however, especially where it departs radically from the *passio*, a deliberate subversion is taking place. The portentous episode from the Virgin's youth in which she is miraculously cured of a strange swelling in her stomach is a scurrilous parody of the sort of folk miracle normally attributed to the healing saints Cosmas and Damian, one of which involves the accidental swallowing and subsequent expulsion of snakes from the stomach (*chrevo*). Moreover, it is this suggestive event which paves the way neatly for the central reversal in the tale - the Precious Virgin's sacrificing of her virginity (i.e. the acceptance of sin) in order to save her compatriots. Unlike the martyrs, who resolutely refuse to compromise their chastity in the face of persecution, the Precious Virgin considers briefly the implications of her act and, after a brief prayer to the Lord, decides that it will not harm her prospects for salvation after all. This blatantly qualifies the
notion of 'martyrdom' as evoked in the passiones, with the penalty of death being replaced by the notion of sacrifice on behalf of others (instead of the vicious physical punishments meted out on the virgin-martyrs by the Roman Emperors, the Precious Virgin undergoes the 'torture' of Erman's love-making!). When Erman slyly reminds the Virgin of her original vows, she tells him that a sin of the flesh only compromises her purity on earth - in heaven, her sacrifice will be viewed as an act of charity and honour. Later, after the brutal tyrant has expressed his disappointment at her cold and mechanical response to his ardour, she responds that it is the soul which is immortal and the body which is mortal - therefore, as long as her spiritual independence is unsullied, she remains pure and undefiled in the moral sense. Naturally, such a view is greatly at odds with the early Christian doctrine on the vital link between bodily and spiritual purity, a doctrine that still held sway in Orthodox circles at the beginning of the twentieth century. In contrast to the insistence that chastity and virginity are supreme spiritual virtues, virtues personified by the historical example of the Virgin Mary, Zamiatin seems to argue in favour of the relative unimportance of the body as a vessel of holiness. In its place he offers the impulse of charity - the reason the Precious Virgin consents to 'sin', albeit under duress, is in order to save others. As she says herself: 'ibo gonimykh radi to sotvorila' (66).

This emphasis on the relative superiority of the caricative impulse is not particularly subversive; neither is it without literary precedent. In his adaptations of the Russian

Nikolai Leskov also explored difficult moral dilemmas and often
quoted church authorities in his defence. *Prekrasnaia Aza*, for example, a narrative adapted from a tale in the Synaxarion for 8 April, opens with an epigraph from the first epistle of St. Peter: 'Love covers a multitude of sins' (4:8).\textsuperscript{54} It tells the story of a pagan woman who gives away all her wealth in order to pay off the debts of a would-be suicide, and then, having become poor herself, falls into prostitution. The moral of the tale, summed up in the words of a wise old Christian who takes pity on her, is that sins committed as a result of altruistic self-sacrifice, if truly repented, are ultimately forgiven - in his own words: 'Primi ot menia privet khristianskii i znai, chto On, k Komu dusha tvoia rvestia, perstom na sypuchem peske tvoi grekh napisal i ostavil smesti ego vetru.'\textsuperscript{55} As Ziolkowski points out in her analysis of this story, although maverick and unintellectual, this attitude is a variation of an idea often expressed in the *Lives* of penitent harlots, and is therefore not entirely lacking in Christian spirit; indeed, the notion that sanctity does not necessitate conventional religious observance or even close affiliation with the official church is very much part of the Russian intellectual tradition.\textsuperscript{56} To a certain extent Zamiatin's tale plays knowingly on such unorthodox inclinations. The crucial difference between *Zenitsadeva* and *Prekasnaia Aza*, however, lies in the total absence of any repentence scene and the generally anarchic, impious spirit of the former. The anonymous author-narrator appears to laud the very sin itself, and handles his theme with a thinly-disguised salaciousness and erotic intent which undermines any pretension to Orthodox respectability. King Erman's rebuke to his young concubine after only thirty days of possession - 'Pochto ot strastei nevosstanovenna Ty? Pochto tsvety persei tvoikh ot lasok ne
trepeshchut, i kak kamenie nechuvstvennoe na lozhe moem vozlezhish? (66) - is not the language of the hagiographers, noted as it was for a certain colourlessness and greyness of tone. Nor is the description of Erman kissing the Precious Virgin's severed nipples the sort of imagistic detail normally savoured for posterity by sacred writers. Even the punishment inflicted on the captive Radimichian women - they are 'flayed' with 'bull-whips' and have their 'tender parts' burnt with 'flaming candles' - carries more than a hint of sexual allusiveness.57

The theme of sin and self-sacrifice in Zenitsa-deva acquires even greater resonance when we come to consider it against the background of war and the problem of national self-preservation in the face of brutal, external aggression. In this respect, although apocryphal, the text of Old Testament Judith is clearly a crucial precursor. This instructional tale of anonymous authorship tells the story of a saintly and beautiful Israelite who single-handedly saves her compatriots from disaster while besieged by the armies of King Nebuchadnezzar. The story is divided into several different sections. The first tells of the brutal pacification by his military general, Holofernes, of several regions prior to attempting an invasion of Judea (chapters 1-3). This leads to the siege of the city of Bethulia, whose inhabitants gradually start to run out of water and die of thirst, and face the prospect of having to break their religious vows in order to survive physically. Concluding that it is better to be the slaves of another master, and to survive, rather than to see their women and children die, the elders of the city prepare to make the necessary arrangements in order to surrender (7:27). The widow Judith,
however, judging this a betrayal of their belief in divine providence, decides to take matters into her own hands. Dispensing with her sackcloth, she dresses herself in her finest ornaments, smothers herself with perfume, and slips out of the city at dawn in order to seek audience with the enemy chief (10: 1-6). Like the Precious Virgin, she takes advantage of her great beauty in order to win his confidence and persuade him that he will take the city without a single loss of life because of the impact of the siege (11: 5-19). After her third day at the enemy camp, she is invited to supper by Holofernes in person, after which, as he lies drunkenly on his bed from having consumed too much alcohol (he is intoxicated with her beauty and is intent on trying to seduce her), she beheads him with his own scimitar (13: 1-10). She then slips back to the city with her maidservant. Holofernes' head is displayed on the city battlements, the enemy flees in disarray, and the children of Israel rush out of the city gates to drive them completely out of their homeland (chapters 14-16).

The Precious Virgin's decision to take the initiative and cross over to the enemy camp in order to alleviate the suffering of her fellow countrymen is clearly modelled closely on Judith. Apart from certain specific echoes - the splendour of Holofernes' tent, which is covered in 'precious stones', and his encouraging words to Judith on first encountering her - it is the general situation of the two female figures which obviously shares much in common. In terms of position, they are both wealthy and therefore independent (Judith, although once married, has been left with the estate and servants of her deceased husband [8: 7-8]);
moreover, in terms of character they are pure, chaste and saintly (Judith is childless, wears a sackcloth,fasts devoutly, remains celibate after the death of her husband right until the end of her life [16: 22], and is generally a model of religious propriety). In both cases their beauty plays a crucial role in gaining them access to their enemy. The Precious Virgin is permitted into Erman's tent precisely on account of her beauty, and it is the prospect of seducing her which prompts his offer of a cessation of hostilities; while Judith dresses attractively and employs her feminine beauty in order to gain access to Holofernes and later put him off his guard (her outstanding beauty is remarked upon on persistently by the author of  Judith and Holofernes expects to seduce her). Both women place their trust in God and are prepared to sin in the belief that this is God's will: Judith lies to Holofernes during her initial audience with him, seems to be prepared to lie with him on the night when she plans to kill him, shares non-kosher food with him, drinks alcohol, and yet appeals to the Lord for strength when it comes to striking him dead (13: 5-9); while the Precious Virgin sacrifices her celibacy and justifies her act on the grounds that it is committed in the defence of others. Furthermore, they both give themselves up to danger on behalf of their compatriots and are fearless in the task they have set themselves. Zamiatin's Virgin risks capture and torture by entering the enemy den, courageously stares Erman straight in the eyes (he is supposedly so ugly that no-one can bear to look at him [66]), and is not cowed by his teasing and threats. By the same token, Judith's assassination is regarded as a 'warrior-like' act of bravery, the heroism of which is recorded for posterity.
precisely because it is demonstrated by a woman, rather than a man.

At this point, however, the numerous parallels end. Judith seeks to deceive her enemy, murders him brutally in cold blood and, through her own example, illustrates that divine providence can act through natural means rather than through miraculous or supernatural intervention. By contrast, Zamiatin's heroine does not seek to beguile her oppressor, but merely desires to negotiate with him, and is ultimately saved by divine intervention in response to urgent prayer. These differences are crucial and reflect the very different messages which their authors endeavour to communicate. Judith is a combination of soldier and seductress, a 'warrior woman' and 'femme fatale' rolled into one. She is a shameless flatterer, a bold-faced liar, a ruthless assassin, and by common consent a 'saint who murdered for her people'. Despite its non-canonical status, moreover, her story is generally interpreted as an exaltation of national and religious patriotism, the edificatory message of which lies in its promotion of active resistance to evil rather than passive surrender. Judith opposes the city elders on the grounds that they are sacrificing the religious values which the community considers sacrosanct, and argues that surrender will lead inevitably to 'profanation and reproach' (Nebuchadnezzar allowed only worship of himself in the lands under his occupation and destroyed all temples dedicated to other deities [3:8]). By contrast, the Precious Virgin seems not so narrowly identified with any particular nation or group. Her Christian faith is supra-national and her epitaph is written in three different languages, one of which is Gothic; in
addition, the decision to emerge from hiding is taken in order to
defend those who are starving and tortured, rather than any
values which her particular community deems sacrosanct. Her
pleas to Erman never refer to her own tribe, the Radimichians,
and although she may be said to be acting on behalf of the broad
community of Slavic tribes who find themselves under the Gothic
yoke, it is primarily the 'poor' (sirie [66]) who welcome her
timely intervention. Thus it can be argued that her negotiation
with King Erman involves a moral sacrifice equal to, and on a par
with the proposal of the elders in *Judith* to sue for peace with
Holofernes, and that Zamiatin is recommending appeasement,
rather than active military resistance. The Precious Virgin is the
embodiment of the principles of negotiation and self-sacrifice in
the interests of peace - indeed, this is the value she places above
all others. If the negotiated settlement breaks down in *Zenitsa-
deva*, this is because the two parties have different views of the
nature of the bargain they have struck and the advantages they
can expect to accrue from it - within the logic of the text, the
miraculous intervention of divine providence suggests that right
and justice are on the young virgin's side, and that her sacrifice
was a virtuous one.

Since the authenticity of *Judith* cannot be verified, and its sacred
status has not been universally accepted, scholarly opinion tends
to diverge on whether it should be considered a historical novel, a
legend, or simply a folktale. Martin Luther King once described it
as an 'allegorical...passion play' - in other words, a fictional
enterprise which drew its inspiration from universal themes. A
similar conceit is incontrovertibly present in Zamiatin's travesty.
The stylized presentation, while alluding to events of the past, imbues the text with a timeless significance as far as the ethical dilemmas posed by foreign aggression are concerned. Yet at the same time there is plenty of evidence that this is a disguise to conceal the fact that the story alludes to the very specific circumstances prevailing when it came to be written. The successful onslaught of the Germanic 'Goths' in relation to the Slavic 'Radimichians', with its hints of trenches ('secret hideouts, dug out from the earth') and partisans fleeing into forests, offer self-evident parallels with the early years of the First World War, during which Russia was suffering defeat after defeat. Furthermore, there are various details in the text which it can be argued allude to specific developments in 1915 and raise the prospect of a deliberate parody or satire on political events.

One clue to uncovering the target of Zamiatin's satire can be found in the events which slightly predate the writing of Zenitsadeva, encompassing the mysterious figure of Rasputin, the Royal family, scandals revolving around canonization attempts and secret peace negotiations - indeed, it is probable that this is the reason why the text could not be published until 1917. Zamiatin contrived his narrative at a time when Russia found herself in the grip of an intense political crisis which had given rise to bitter power struggles around the throne. A contributing factor was the scandal which involved the attempted canonization of a holy figure from the Siberian town of Tobolsk, Rasputin's birthplace, which gathered momentum during the summer and autumn of 1915. On 15 June, the local Bishop, a man called Varnava, and the local townspeople petitioned the Holy Synod for the
cannonization of Ioann Maksimovich, a pious theological scholar who had died exactly two hundred years previously and been popularly revered in the locality. Suspecting Varnava of manoeuvring indirectly for promotion, and finding his association with Rasputin distasteful, the Holy Synod demanded proof that miracles had occurred at Ioann's grave and that his body had been preserved from decay, even though it was known from an earlier examination of his grave that the second, at least, had not occurred. In the face of such resistance, Varnava turned for support via Rasputin and the Empress Aleksandra Fedorovna to the very Tsar himself, arguing that recognition would greatly increase the popularity of the Church at a time when religious belief generally was on the wane. On the instructions of the Empress, and in flat contradiction of the official position of the Orthodox Synod, Bishop Varnava was given permission on 2 September to 'sing laudation' (prophet velichanie) on Maksimovich's behalf, the first stage towards full canonization (intriguingly, in light of the weather miracle in Zenitsa-dva, it was recorded that for several days no thunder was heard above the town - proof, supposedly, that the heavens rejoiced at Varnava's act). In the lead up to this celebration, however, Rasputin's pressure was exposed and the campaign gave rise to vicious faction fighting around the throne and within the religious establishment as a whole, so much so that it rapidly became the talking point of all Russia. Censorship restrictions were lifted so that newspapers could attack Rasputin directly (between 14-18 August Birzhevye vedomosti printed a series of exposés under the heading: 'Zhite startsa Rasputina'). On 15 September the ensuing power struggle forced the resignation of the Synod's
director-general, Aleksandr Samarin, and was followed two days later by factories going on strike. This led to public denunciations of Rasputin's meddling in state affairs in the Duma and quickly developed into a political crisis of serious proportions.

A parallel reason for this crisis was the disastrous state of the Imperial Army's military campaign against the Germans, which had led Nicholas himself to assume control of the High Command in August 1915. One by-product of this state of affairs was the almost pathological desire on the part of the general population to seek scapegoats for the defeats, leading in turn to what has been termed the 'Legend of the Separate Peace'. As several contemporary observers testified at the time, ordinary Russians were extremely sensitive to rumours that 'pro-German' elements within the establishment were seeking to negotiate a separate peace with the enemy in total repudiation of Russia's treaty obligations towards the Entente. Within weeks of war breaking out in August 1914, the finger of suspicion had been pointed firmly at Empress Aleksandra Fedorovna, since she was of German descent and known to have tried publicly to halt the drift to war during the diplomatic manoeuvrings that same summer (one historian has described her at this time as 'the sole force for peace in St. Petersburg'). Worse still, she enjoyed close links with the dubious figure of Rasputin, the religious mystic also known to have been opposed to the war when it first broke out, convinced that it would lead to the end of the Romanov dynasty. With the benefit of hindsight, buttressed by the detailed examination of her private correspondence with the Tsar by a special commission set up in 1917 by the Kerenskii government,
it appears that the rumours regarding the Empress' desire to negotiate a separate peace treaty were completely without foundation. At the time, however, such rumours were widely believed and resulted in a lack of confidence about the Empress' loyalty to her adopted homeland. As various observers noted, the political crisis caused by the Varnava scandal, combined with the wider hostility towards the 'pro-German' Empress and Rasputin, would eventually lead to the very overthrow of the monarchy itself.76

The degree to which Zamiatin may have been aware of these crises in the public life of his country can only speculated upon; nevertheless, it seems too much of a coincidence that he should combine a hagiographic parody in the style of a eulogy with the theme of a great war which leads to the temporary subjugation of the Slavs roughly at a time when both issues were dominating the Russian political scene. Whether it is possible to go further and view Zenitsa-deva as a satire on the popular misconceptions concerning the alleged machinations of the Royal Family during the war is a different matter. Certain details in the text would seem to support such an interpretation. The choice of the hagiographic genre implicit in the title, the female gender of the main protagonist, and the early medieval stylization of the text would have evoked the memories of several saints, all of them female and born of royal birth. The very first saint in Russian history, St. Ol'ga, was the wife of Prince Igor', and thus a ruling member of the Scandinavian dynasty which governed Kiev during the ninth century before she became, after her husband's treacherous murder, the ruler in her own right. The theme of the
strong woman overcoming powerful male opponents and protecting her subjects from external aggression is fundamental to the fragments of her Life recorded in the *Primary Chronicle*. Similar *topoi* feature in the *Life* of the eleventh century Scandinavian princess, St. Anna of Novgorod, a woman heavily engaged in imperial diplomacy and the settling of military disputes through personal challenges until she retired to a monastery in 1045. Indeed, the importance of canonized royal figures generally as defenders of the nation is a standard feature of the hagiographic genre. The Russian Orthodox Church boasts several saints with royal blood, the most celebrated of whom are Vladimir the Great, Boris and Gleb, and Aleksandr Nevskii, all associated in the popular mind with national salvation and the relative merit of military resistance as against appeasement (Nevskii, although famous for his military defeat of the Teutonic Knights on an ice-bound Lake Peipus in 1242, was also renowned for his policy of conciliation towards invading Tatars).

Aside from this general allusiveness, there are several veiled hints in *Zenitsa-deva* that the central protagonist herself possesses royal blood. The mention of her father's 'priceless jewels' and many 'horses and slaves' suggests noble status at the very least. The golden halo of her hair, a leitmotif employed by the anonymous chronicler ostensibly to indicate her angel-like purity, could equally well allude to her royal blood, since the word in question, *venets*, means both 'halo' and 'crown' in Russian. It is worth noting that in the recently published Galushkin edition of the story, this crown is actually described as *otrozhdennyi* - literally, 'present from the day she was born';
indeed, it is only after Erman's warrior-guard espies this venets - an indication, presumably, of her authority - that the Virgin is permitted into his tent (intriguingly, the Empress actually did possess hair of a red-gold colour). The curious fictional episode of the serpent which swells up in the Virgin's womb in Zenitsadeva could be a scurrilous allusion to a real event in the life of Empress which was widely known about in the capital - namely, the phantom pregnancy suffered in the spring of 1902 while she and her husband were awaiting the birth of an heir to the throne. This followed several months of consultation with an assorted group of mystics and faith-healers, among them a quack French doctor called Monsieur Philippe whose medical 'expertise' included occult medicine, sorcery, fortune-telling, mesmerism and somnambulism (being of a strong mystical bent herself, the Empress was impressed by the Frenchman's alleged ability to select the sex of an embryo 'through the most transcendental practices of hermetic medicine, astronomy and psychurgy', a skill which obviously failed him in his moment of need). We may regard the confusion which surrounds her burial at the end of the story - the local population are not certain of her faith and write her epitaph in Hellenic, Slavonic and German - as an allusion to the perception of the Empress's mixed allegiances. Indeed, the imperial couple's oft-publicized trust in the wisdom and goodness of the 'common folk', and the performing of charity work as part of their public duties (the Empress visited several military hospitals during the opening months of the war and later set up a committee under the presidency of Prince Nikolai Golitsyn to look after the interests of Russian prisoners of war), is echoed when Zamiatin's chronicler describes how the Precious Virgin decides to
dedicate her life to the poor and her concern for the condition of her people when war breaks out.\textsuperscript{83}

Like his later colleague and protector, Maksim Gor´kii, whose negative attitude towards the war was pronounced repeatedly during 1914 and 1915, Zamiatin was essentially a pacifist by nature. He had already run into trouble with the censors in 1914 for the 'anti-military' sentiments expressed in \textit{Na kulichkakh}, although this had occurred before the start of the war proper.\textsuperscript{84} He was troubled by the enthusiasm with which teenagers were volunteering to join up when war actually broke out - this is made explicit in a letter written to his wife from his home town of Lebedian´ on 28 July (Old Style) 1914.\textsuperscript{85} And the sentimental piece about an Australian soldier who has lost his sight on account of the war, possibly written while Zamiatin was still in England, but published in \textit{Delo naroda} as the peace negotiations with the Germans were reaching a critical phase, betrays similar sentiments.\textsuperscript{86} Undeniably, \textit{Zenitsa-deva} contributes a further dimension to this attitude. As Lampl and Franz point out, Zamiatin's selection of material for parody engages in polemics, not only with the tradition of sacred writing \textit{per se}, but also with the patriotic 'abuse' of such material by such writers as Aleksei Remizov during the early months of the war. Commenting on his prose collection \textit{Za sviatuiu Rus´}, \textit{Dumy o rodnoi zemle}, which was published on behalf of the war-wounded in 1915, and \textit{Ukrepa. Slovo k russkoi zemle o zemle rodnoi, tainostiakh zemnykh i sud´be} (1916), Lampl observed:
The Old Russian stylization takes on an additional function here: through the implicit memory of the national past it calls associatively on the patriotic conscience of the Russian reader. Like many other prominent Russian authors, Remizov in 1914 put his literary creation into the service of the tsarist war psychology.\textsuperscript{87}

In contrast, Zamiatin's stylization serves as a 'mocking' of the cult of the national Russian past and therefore stands in direct opposition to the patriotic pathos of Remizov's work.\textsuperscript{88} Indeed, it would not be an exaggeration to assert that Zenitsa-deva verges on literary and political nihilism. It flouts the conventions of the hagiographic narrative, mocks the sacrifices of the virgin-martyrs, ridicules the patriotic pathos of the \textit{Primary Chronicle}, casts aspersions on the process of canonization in modern times, satirizes the alleged peace-initiative of the Empress and makes fun of the popular incomprehension of her motives. It is hardly surprising that it could not be published until the Royal Family had been overthrown and before peace negotiations with the German government had been launched in earnest (any later, and there was the real danger that Zenitsa-deva might be misread as a satire on the progress of the negotiations).

\textit{O tom, kak istsele\textemdash byl inok Erazm}

The two hagiographic parodies published after the October Revolution, \textit{Inok Erazm} and \textit{Pepel'\textsuperscript{\textcyrillic}naia Sreda}, offer further evidence of Zamiatin's interest in stylization primarily as a
vehicle for satire. There are two reasons why this became a general exigency. The ferocity of the Soviet censorship after 1918 meant that writers critical of the new regime were forced to seek allegorical or coded means of expression in order to voice their criticisms. Furthermore, it was common among left-wing intellectuals to seek analogies between the ideological fanaticism of the Bolshevik movement and early Christian zealotry. Whether this view was merited is a debatable issue; nevertheless, works set in the distant past and stylizations modelled on sources or events relating to the history of the Orthodox Church came to be imbued with a political dimension and were thus read as allegorical statements on contemporary affairs.

Zamiatin himself was involved in this strategy right from the very beginning of the Revolution. His historical pageant play, Ogni sviatogo Dominika (1921), is a blatant attack on the ideological conformity and repressive mentality of the Bolsheviks in the immediate post-October period, apparently so similar to the 'Spanish Inquisition' in its intensity and ferocity. A similarly crude analogy lies at the heart of the 'tale for children', Tserkov' bozhiia (1920), and underpins the symbolic design of his celebrated dystopian novel, My (1920). Historical parallelism at its crudest is employed in Zamiatin's spoof epistle, Tulumbas. Poslanie smirennogo Zamutiia, episkopa obez'ianskogo, which was published for the first time in issue no. 2/3 of Zapiski mechtatelei in 1921. Written in the style of the early Christian apologists, this piece consisted of a mock defence of the conditions prevailing during the civil war, many of which, ironically, conformed to the rigorous and ascetic practices of the
early Christian fathers: permanent fasting, prohibition of alcohol, simple attire and total rejection of physical or sensual pleasure. In *Tulumbas*, albeit lightheartedly, Zamiatin expressed the conviction that Bolshevik hostility to opinions and views other than their own in no way differed from the early Church's intolerance of heretical creeds: is it not always better, he suggests mischievously through the mouthpiece of his bishop, to seal the lips of the 'heretical few' rather than risk the 'infection' of the many? The absurd title of this 'bishop', 'Zamutii, Bishop of the Apes', which was an allusion to the sobriquet given to Zamiatin as a member of Remizov's 'Great and Free Society of Apes' (*Obez`ian`ia Velikaia i Vole`naia Palata*, 'Obezvelvolpal' for short), serves notice that parodic pieces of this kind involved a good deal of private jokes between writers who increasingly felt excluded from public life and were thus forced to develop an Aesopian language of their own in order to be published. The reaction of Marxist literary critics to these works suggests that their allegorical mechanisms, and the object of their attacks, were blatantly transparent. Nevertheless, despite its greater subtlety and complexity, it is my contention that *Inok Erazm* belongs to a similar brand of fictional enterprise, one which contains knowing allusions to the condition of culture in the years immediately after the Revolution. Like *Zenitsa-deva*, its authenticity as an ecclesiastical document is patently false and it seeks to propagate its message via subtle innuendo and analogy.

Although it was published for the first time in 1922, the first draft of *Inok Erazm* was written in August 1920 while Zamiatin was teaching creative writing skills at the Petrograd House of
That he intended this narrative as another 'forgery' in the style of Zenitsa-deva is evident from the design of the original edition, issued by Grzhebin's émigré Petropolis publishing house in Berlin. Printed in pre-revolutionary typeface, and graced with pseudo-religious sketches by the artist Boris Kustodiev in the form of inset pictures and frames across the top and bottom of every page, the pamphlet bears all the hallmarks of the chapbook, or lubok, versions of Saints' Lives which became available for the first time at the turn of the century. However, in contrast to Zenitsa-deva, it is not immediately clear to which particular brand of 'sacred' composition this narrative belongs. In part, this confusion arises because of the manner in which the Berlin edition itself is printed, with two separate titles offered on the cover page and inside page respectively: O tom, kak istselen byl otrok Erazm; and the longer O blazhennom startse Pamve nereste, o narochitoi premudrosti ego, o mnogikh proisshedshikh chudesnykh znameniiakh, i o tom, kak byl istselen inok Erazm. This division neatly presages the dual focus of the text. On the one hand, it concerns a young novice named Erasmus who possesses a 'divine' talent for icon painting, yet begins to experience mysterious, erotic visions and finally has to be purged of heretical thoughts; and on the other hand, there is his mentor and guardian, the pious elder, Pamva, who possesses miraculous powers of 'spawning' (he cures couples suffering from infertility) and ultimately exorcises the demons which plague the young novice's imagination. To complicate matters further, both characters are associated with standard hagiographical topoi and therefore may be regarded as saintly figures in their own right. However, the key to the generic status of the text can be found at
the end, where the ostensible narrator, a scribe called Innocent, announces that the narrative has been recorded for the 'edification' (nazidanie) of the other elders in the monastery on account of the great wisdom shown by Pamva. This makes his story 'apocryphal' in the true sense of the word. Indeed, Pamva's designation as 'blessed elder' (blazhennyi starets), a conventional indication of his saintly status, strengthens further the case for treating the narrative as an edificatory and laudatory episode from a longer 'Life' (zhitie), an episode which venerates his wisdom and skill in the face of an unusual challenge. Thus, while clearly a work of considerably greater literary sophistication than the standard chudo, Inok Erazm bears some relationship to the kind of hagiographic text which praises the healing skills of holy figures against a background of demonic provocation.

Inok Erazm charts the passage from innocence to experience of a young novice under the wise and experienced tutelage of a pious elder. As in Zenitsa-deva, the main subject appears to concern the temptations of the flesh. Pamva, the saintly head of a monastic community, is renowned for his ability to perform miracles of various kinds, including the ability to cure women of infertility. He himself brings the young Erasmus into the world, having miraculously cured his mother, and demands in return that the young boy enter into the monastery as soon as his age permits it. Erasmus proves to be an extraordinary child. Already on the day his parents bring him to be consecrated, there are signs that the young boy will be a troublesome addition to the fraternity. As Pamva welcomes him, two doves alight on a grave-
stone nearby and indulge in amorous frolicking. The implication of this sign is not lost on the blessed elder: he tells his young novice that the devils are already 'casting their nets' for him, but that they seek only 'precious quarry' (464). The innocent Erasmus turns out to possess many talents, one of which is his voice. Compared to a mountain stream which tumbles from great heights and fertilises the barren wastes below, his reading of the scriptures possesses a powerful, erotic charge which excites his audience, causing their breath to quicken and their cheeks to flame (465). The subversive power of such a gift is not lost on the saintly Pamva: as a precaution, he decides to isolate the young man and entrusts him with the task of painting an icon of St. Mary of Egypt, in the hope that the Life of the penitent whore will provide him with a proper understanding of the evils of the flesh. Unfortunately, his plan goes awry. Erasmus is so ignorant of the female form that he is unable to depict the naked harlot correctly. He thus prays to the saint for a vision which will reveal to him the secrets of the flesh, and, miraculously, his prayers are answered. Like a shimmering apparition, St. Mary herself appears and reveals to him, one by one, the four 'secrets' which her body possesses. Erasmus is naturally aroused by this lesson in biology and cannot help but express his ecstasy in the icon painting itself.

Taking advantage of Pamva's temporary absence from the monastery on important business, Erasmus exhibits his painting to the other monks. The erotic force of the work is simply too much for them. Their pent-up sexual frustration explodes, and Pamva returns to find the entire monastery engaged in impious activities with the local womenfolk. The blessed elder prays that they may be saved, and as he does so, a voice speaks to him,
saying: 'Spusti strelu, i oslabnet tetiva, i uzhe ne budet bolee smertonosen luk' (474). Pamva interprets this as an instruction from God to initiate Erasmus into the fourth and final secret, thus satisfying his desire to know the truth and at the time releasing him from sexual tension. The stratagem is successful. Erasmus is no longer visited by wicked visions and his painting of holy figures ceases to be sacrilegious. To all intents and purposes he is 'healed'.

In so far as Inok Erazm appears to offer an unorthodox cure for the temptations of the flesh, it is probably Zamiatin's most irreverent piece of fiction. Like its predecessor, Zenitsa-deva, it attempts to preserve the illusion of hagiographic authenticity by virtue of language and style, employing several conventional topoi and numerous allusions to sacred literature. The most obvious commonplace is the theme of temptation, which traditionally involves the anchorite or confessor saint finding himself tempted from the path of piety by the devil - this is the topos mentioned in Zamiatin's 1927 article on Boris Kustodiev and it emerges here in the form of Erasmus' visions of the young Mary in his cell at nightfall. Pamva's wonder-working power as the 'spawner' echoes the life of Ignatius, the saint popularly invoked in Russia against the curse of sterility; indeed, the miraculous circumstance of Erasmus' birth echoes the many stories of holy figures born after their parents experience the humiliation of long-term infertility. These include the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary, the apocryphal version of which is recorded in the Protoevangelium of James (like Erasmus, Mary is also consecrated to the service of the Lord
when she has reached sufficient maturity); the births of Isaac (see Genesis, chapter 21, verse 2), Samuel (see First Book of Samuel, chapter 1, verses 1-20), John the Baptist (see Luke, chapter 1, verses 5-25), as well as the births of Saint Euphrosyne and Alexis, 'Man of God'. Zamiatin's scribe makes two allusions to the Bible: Solomon's *The Song of Songs*, which Erasmus reads out to the assembled monks in an early part of the narrative (465-66); and the doubting words of Thomas the Apostle on receiving news of Christ's resurrection (469). In addition, several ecclesiastical texts are mentioned in the context of Erasmus' education, such as the Bible, the *Lives of the Holy Fathers*, the *Tsvetniki* and *Izborniki otecheskie* (ancient ecclesiastical collections, better known perhaps as the *pateriki*), and the *Reading Menaea* (the source on which Erasmus bases his version of the *Life* of St. Mary of Egypt [467], although it is not clear whether it is Makarii's or Dmitrii of Rostov's). Suffice it to say, all quotations, allusions and *topoi* are subverted for polemical purposes, giving rise to the suspicion that Innocent the scribe is precisely what his name suggests, i.e. innocent of the ultimate implications of the narrative he has written.

This can be seen most clearly in his parodic treatment of the *Life* of St. Mary of Egypt, a hagiographic account which appeared originally in the form of Bishop Sophronius' Greek narrative of the sixth century (it is this version, translated into Church Slavonic in 1621, which forms the basis of the menological account in Makarii and Dmitrii of Rostov's *Reading Menaea*, as well as the Russian Prolog for 1 April. Considered a slightly unorthodox model of repentance, Mary's story had become
available in popular versions at the turn of the century and captured the imagination of several writers prior to Zamiatin, including Remizov. Sophronius' hagiographic account opens with a description of a monk from a monastery in Palestine, Father Zosima, an extremely good and pious believer who is unflagging in his praise of God and occasionally blessed with divine visions. Nevertheless, tormented by the thought that he has reached a state of perfection, and therefore has no need of further instruction from others, Zosima decides to leave his monastery and withdraw into the desert. There, he comes across a naked woman who first appears to him in the guise of a ghost hovering several inches above the ground in the desert moonlight. Zosima is intrigued by this apparition and begs to hear her story. Mary tells the story of her misspent youth in the city of Alexandria and how she became a harlot simply for the fun of it: 'For more than seventeen years, I passed my life openly tarrying in the fires of lust,' she tells the shocked Zosima. 'I had not lost my virginity for any gift of money, for I frequently refused what they wanted to give me. I did this with as many people as I could get to come to me (...) what I did, I did out of insatiable lust.' Her conversion is a particularly dramatic one. Driven by curiosity, she decides one day to join a group of pilgrims travelling to Jerusalem for the festival of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, many of whom she seduces during the voyage. Having arrived at the church, however, she is prevented from crossing the threshold by an invisible force and is immediately overwhelmed by a sense of contrition for past deeds. She breaks down, weeping, and prays to the Virgin Mary that her sins may be forgiven. The next morning, she finds that she is able to enter
the church and venerate the cross, and as she does so she hears a voice telling her that in order to find eternal peace from her inner torment, she must cross the river Jordan into the desert. There she spends the next forty-seven years, living on a diet of bread and water, until found by the pious monk.

Unlike all previous adaptations of the tale, including Remizov's reworked versions, Zamiatin's 'account' rests primarily on a subtle combination of parallelism and subversion. Mary is presented in both Sophronius and Inok Erazm as the instrument of a divine message, the comprehension of which is eagerly sought by the protagonists concerned. Yet the nature of that message and the didactic lesson which can be learnt from it are radically different. Inok Erazm realises the latent erotic potential of the original by imaginatively reversing the focus and blatantly manipulating the 'facts'. In Sophronius' account, Mary tells the story of her youth in a tone of voice which unmistakeably reveals her anguish and deep-rooted regret; moreover, she is presented as a shining example of religious humility and modesty, the like of which Father Zosima cannot ever hope to emulate. This attitude is suppressed in Zamiatin. The eroticism of Mary's adolescent years and the hunger for sexual experience which it expresses, neither of which is particularly emphasized by Sophronius, is held constantly before the reader's eyes in Inok Erazm; indeed, at various moments it contributes to the entire labyrinth of images around which the narrative is constructed. Mary appears before Erasmus, not scorched from the desert sun and aged after nearly fifty years of desolate wandering, as in Sophronius' account, but dressed alluringly in shimmering and semi-
transparent clothing, to all intents and purposes a young virgin intent on losing her virginity. Deceived by this vision, the product, no doubt, of his own fertile imagination, Erasmus unsurprisingly finds himself departing significantly from the menological account in the execution of his icon picture, and thus substitutes his own erotic fantasies for Sophronius' chaste and modest descriptions. In the *Menaeae* account, Father Zosima lends his cloak to Mary so that she may conceal her embarrassed state of nakedness; while in Erasmus' painting, this cloak is whipped away by the wind, causing the elderly monk to cast his eyes down in embarrassment at his own state of excitement (we know that this vision belongs to the realms of Erasmus' private fantasy, rather than to the official hagiographic account). Generally, in contrast to its function as a sanctuary for spiritual contemplation in the *Lives*, the desert in *Inok Erazm* is a place of dryness and sterility, one incapable of producing life - as Pamva himself says to Erasmus' mother after he has cured her of infertility: 'Otnyne muzh tvoi uzhe ne budet podoben pakhariu, vozdeyvaliushchemu pesok, i trud ego prineset plody' (I, 463). These words are subversive, since the image of the seed planted in the earth is usually applied to the dissemination of the holy gospel, rather than the act of sexual procreation. Nevertheless, they anticipate the main problem which Erasmus' gift will pose to the cloistered community.

As a celebration of sexual love, or sexual awakening, *Inok Erazm* reflects to a certain degree the turn of the century teachings of the philosopher-poet Vladimir Solov' ev. It is no coincidence that in his treatise on the meaning of love, *Smysl liubvi*, Solov' ev
referred to Solomon's *The Song of Songs* in support of his view that sexual love was the only force capable of truly transforming the physical nature of man into something of noble and spiritual value.\(^{109}\) It is interesting, moreover, that the moment of revelation in his poetry is often expressed symbolically by the red glow of the horizon, either at sunrise or sunset, an image later developed by the Symbolist poets Aleksandr Blok and Andrei Belyi.\(^{110}\) Undeniably, Zamiatin places much greater emphasis on the erotic and sexual dimension of love, and does so with an explicitness which Solov'ev and his Symbolist disciples might well have found lewd, if not altogether vulgar; indeed, in terms of its erotic imagery, it is surely not idle to speculate upon the devilish influence of Pushkin's blasphemous *Gavriiliada*, the first legal edition of which had appeared only two years previously.\(^{111}\) For his part, Zamiatin considered his own story relatively tasteful, and compared the suggestive, but by no means explicit sketches of Kustodiev accompanying the 1922 edition with the primitive and semi-pornographic designs of Konstantin Somov, the illustrator of *Chto est' tabak*.\(^{112}\) In my view, this statement is rather disingenuous. There are several images in the narrative which are obscene and would no doubt have offended his less liberated readers: the raincloud which showers the monks with what appear to be drops of semen;\(^{113}\) Pamva's curing of a woman possessed with insatiable cravings by placing his finger three times on her 'burning nature' (467); the description of the 'aroma' which Erasmus detects when he kisses Mary's clothing (an uncharacteristically direct detail for Zamiatin [468]); and the comparison of the novice's prominent erection with the stalk of a flower straining upwards toward the sun (469). Less blatantly
obscene, but by no means orthodox, is the allusion which lies behind the divine instruction supposedly delivered to Pamva while praying for Erasmus' salvation: 'Spusti strelu, i oslabnet tetiva, i uzhe ne budet bolee smertonosen luk' (474). The erotic connotations of this instruction are obvious; yet originally, in the mouth of the merchant Zeno in Leskov's Prolog adaptation, Gora. Egipetskaia povest' (1890), the metaphor was offered as an unorthodox view on how best to preserve the strength of the faith:

'- la vsomnil slova Amazisa: tetiva na Luke slaba, poka na nee ne naložhat strelu i rukoi ee ne natianut. Kogda zhe nuzhno, chtoby ona napriaglas', ona napriazhetsia i sil'no udarit; no esli ee postoianno tianut' i derzhat' v napriazhenii, ona istonchaet i sila ee oslabeet.'

The merchant, who has previously struck out his eye in order to resist the sexual provocations of a female pagan, believes that religious faith is demonstrated most effectively at crucial, 'testing' moments, rather than on a continual, ritualistic basis - otherwise, by demanding unrealistic sacrifices on the part of the believer, the faith steadily diminishes. Zamiatin transforms this idea rather cleverly into a metaphor for sexual restraint versus sexual release: if the arrow of sexual tension (rather than faith) is released, the constant urge to 'sin' is overcome. An analogy from the world of nature, a particularly appropriate one bearing in mind the association of the term 'St. Elmo's fire' with the original, fourth-century St. Erasmus of Formiae, would be the phenomenon

298
of lightning - a charge which builds up gradually and then has to be discharged.\textsuperscript{116}

Because the combination of restraint, tension and release applies to many spheres of human experience, not merely the religious or sexual, this bow-and-arrow metaphor can be read on several additional levels. Indeed, one of the more intriguing analogies belongs to the realms of artistic creation. Undeniably, a central preoccupation of \textit{Inok Erazm} is the mysteries of the creative process, the degree to which art should or should not be placed under control or guidance, and the conditions under which it may safely flourish. In so far as \textit{Inok Erazm} shows an artist in the process of creating a work of art at the very same time as a fictional narrative unfolds about the making of that art, it is essentially a metafiction and displays all the hallmarks of an archetypal \textit{mise-en-abime} text. Erasmus' impulse to encode his own experience into the subject of his painting, thereby reshaping his source material into an original vision, necessarily finds its parallel in the narrative strategies employed by Zamiatin himself as the real author who stands behind the ostensible narrator. Just as Erasmus unconsciously subverts the didactic message of the \textit{Reading Menaea} account into a painting which causes his audience to collapse into an orgy of impious activity, so Zamiatin as author distorts the \textit{Life} of St. Mary and deliberately compromises the piety of Innocent's record. Admittedly, the fictional protagonist and author differ markedly in terms of the knowingness and sophistication with which they undertake their respective tasks; nevertheless, it is possible to see the processes at work as synonymous and complementary, and to regard the
text as a potential allegory about the situation of art in the post-revolutionary era. It is interesting to note that the umbilical relationship between protagonist and creator is humorously 'laid bare' by Zamiatin in *Zhitie Blokhi* (1926), an account of the conception and staging of *Blokha* which parodies not only the *Lives*, but also the very works of Zamiatin himself in the same genre.\(^{117}\) Zamiatin is easily identifiable in this sketch as the icon-painting hermit - his name, Zamutii, refers back to *Tulumbas* and his title in the 'Great Order of Apes', while Kustodiev's caricatured depiction of the character alongside the text leaves no room for doubt; moreover, the pregnancy to which this icon-artist falls victim gives rise, eventually, to the birth of a work of art itself - the stage play, *Blokha*. As a self-referential text which relies on private jokes and allusions to real people involved in the production of culture - it was written for an evening of parody organized in December 1926 by the Physico-Geographical Association (FIGA) - *Zhitie Blokhi* develops further the coded style of writing employed by Zamiatin in his brief history of the World Literature publishing project, with which he was associated from its beginnings in 1919 to its final closure in 1924.\(^{118}\) The artists, writers and philosophers mentioned among his collaborators are given code names which are opaque and incomprehensible for the non-initiated; indeed, both texts were intended initially for 'internal consumption' only and written with preconceived notions about their intended audience. In essence, *Inok Erazm* involves a similar conceit. As Innocent confesses at the end of his narrative, the story is only intended for the elders of the monastery, ordinary monks (i.e. the non-initiated) not permitted access to it. Furthermore, there are
parallels between the plot of the narrative and the cultural situation in the post-revolutionary Soviet Union which suggest that *Inok Erazm* may be another text which employs coded language in order to smuggle through themes with a contemporary slant.\textsuperscript{119}

Pamva's guiding of the young Erasmus and his role as the novice's 'guardian angel' has several possible allegorical readings if we bear in mind the condition in which literature found itself during the immediate post-revolutionary period and the crucial role played by Maksim Gor'kii in ensuring its survival. This was a time when destitute writers and artists, desperately trying to survive the hardships of famine caused by civil war and revolution, were forced increasingly to turn to the State for financial help and patronage. In Zamiatin's case, this took the form of work for several publishing ventures and establishments set up and chaired by Gor'kii with this express purpose in mind.\textsuperscript{120} From 1918 to 1920 he worked as an editor at the Union of Practitioners of Imaginative Literature and the World Literature Publishing House (*Vsemirnaia literatura*). At roughly the same time, between 1919 and 1921, he was actively engaged with translating studios and lectures on the techniques of creative writing at the House of Arts in Petrograd, along with other literary luminaries.\textsuperscript{121} It is unlikely that the implications of this unique state of dependency, one not far removed in essence from the Church patronage of the arts in the Middle Ages, were lost on him. Many years later, in his 1936 obituary, he mentioned Gor'kii's habit of referring to himself jokingly as the 'literary archpriest' of Soviet literature, a self-confession of his
role as purveyor of literary taste and 'intercessor' on behalf of needy authors and families. This is reflected in the opening pages of Zamiatin's humorous account of the World Literature publishing venture, where he describes the 'fruitful abundance' which characterizes the rule of Avgust Maksim (Gor'kii's code name) and the blessing of all the 'new-born children' on his fiftieth birthday. Pamva's curing of infertility by means of bread and fish in Inok Erazm can be read allegorically as the feeding of the artist so that he or she may (pro)create, something of a 'miracle' in view of the harsh reality prevailing at the time. The analogy is reinforced by such words as 'work' (trud), 'fruit' (plod) and 'barrenness' (besplodie), all of which have poetic connotations pertaining to the craft of writing and which are used regularly by Zamiatin himself in relationship to literary production in Kratkaia istoriia. Intriguingly, in the same 1936 obituary Zamiatin also referred to Gor'kii's highly protective attitude towards the Serapion Brothers, describing him in terms of a 'chicken fussing over her brood of chicks'. This is an image which had already figured in Inok Erazm, and suggests perhaps that Zamiatin had the competing influences of himself and Gor'kii on these young writers in mind when he came to compose his own 'indecorous' narrative: are not the demons which tempt Erasmus into impious thoughts an allegorical representation of Zamiatin's 'malign influence' on the Serapion Brothers while teaching them at the House of Arts? The idea of Zamiatin himself as an impious contaminator of innocent minds, an idea which drew on the analogy of the demons in hagiographic literature who tempt saints from the path of true piety, featured in his own
discussion of Kustodiey's designs for the original 1922 Berlin edition.\textsuperscript{126}

Although the Serapion Brothers as a literary circle was not officially inaugurated until February 1921, that is to say, six months after the first draft of \textit{Inok Erazm}, Zamiatin had been teaching four of its members (Lev Lunts, Nikolai Nikitin, Mikhail Zoshchenko and Mikhail Slonimskii) since December 1919, i.e. when the literary studio was first launched.\textsuperscript{127} The relative influence of Gor'kii and Zamiatin on these talented writers was a subject of conflict at the time, and has subsequently become a matter for scholarly dispute now that its significance for the future course of Soviet literature has been recognized. It would perhaps be exaggerating matters to claim, as some have done, that the conflict over how these young writers should develop was hostile and bitter. It was known that Gor'kii jealously guarded their well-being, writing an enthusiastic preface to the first Serapion almanach published in the summer of 1921; moreover, it is no secret that several Serapions viewed him as their 'Teacher' (uchitel'), 'Master' (maître), and even 'Prophet' (prorok).\textsuperscript{128} An entirely different view of the matter was taken by Zamiatin, however. In his own review of the almanach, written in 1922, he claimed that, with the exception of Konstantin Fedin, the Serapions clearly rejected the 'realistic' approach of their mentor in favour of a more radical and experimental 'neorealism' (an aesthetic preference for which, reading between the lines, Zamiatin claimed the credit).\textsuperscript{129} In his later obituary, moreover, he insinuated that their great respect for Gor'kii owed more to his wisdom and knowledge of life than to any intrinsic
interest in him as a practising artist. Whatever individual members of the group may have said to the contrary - Nikitin, for instance, rejected Zamiatin's influence in a private letter to Voronskii, although this may have been politically motivated - the very choice of name for their circle testified to Zamiatin's influence as a teacher and practitioner. The Hoffmann tale from which the name derived tells of a young man who calls himself 'Priest Serapion', and whose mind is hostage to such brilliant fancies that he imagines himself to be a celebrated anchorite martyred in the fourth century. Thus the battle with Gor'kii, if 'battle' is the correct word, was fought over the 'realistic' and 'fantastic' tendencies in the Serapions' work, with Gor'kii in favour of the former, and Zamiatin promoting the latter. To give Gor'kii his due, he encouraged these writers to read Zamiatin, and admitted that he had written 'much that was truthful' in his 1922 review; yet it was primarily the early fiction which he recommended to them, rather than the overwrought, ornamental, synthetic stories of the 'middle-period'. The early twenties found him increasingly irritated by the 'coldness' and the 'mechanical quality' of Zamiatin's art, especially as illustrated in the works of literary fantasy, such as Rasskaz o samom glavnom, and later, when it was published in the emigré journal, Volia, the dystopian novel, My. He seemed personally offended by some of Zamiatin's output, in particular the humorous account of the World Literature venture and Inok Erazm itself. Writing to A. I. Tikhonov in 1924 after Inok Erazm had been printed in the fourth issue of Russkii sovremennik, a private journal launched by Zamiatin himself and Kornei Chukovskii that very same year, he described the story as a 'vulgar joke' (grubaia shutka) and

304
claimed to see nothing of literary merit in it.\textsuperscript{135} Zamiatin's slightly mocking comparison of the World Literature project with the building of the Tower of Babylon also caused him consternation: 'Malo poniatna mne ironiia Zamiatina po povodu "Vavilonskikh bashen"," he wrote in the same letter to Tikhonov. 'Ia dumaiu, chto imenno k postroeniiu takovykh i svoditsia vsia sut' kul'turnoi deiatel'nosti cheloveka.'\textsuperscript{136} The offended tone seems out of proportion to the nature of the offence and suggests perhaps that Gor'kii had recognized himself as the nominal 'target' in each case.

It is my view that Zamiatin's choice of a monastic subject for his parody, and the description of Pamva as the young novice's 'guardian angel' and 'teacher' (uchitel' [469]), points unambiguously to the 'spawning' and subsequent sparring which enveloped the young writers later to join the Serapion circle: on one side stood Gor'kii, a wise, patient worker of 'miracles' whose imagination conformed to the plodding 'orthodoxies' of the realist tradition (later to become transmuted into Socialist Realism); while on the other stood the 'demon' Zamiatin, who tempts the novice into searching for forbidden secrets and concealed knowledge via the mysteries of dream visions and fantasy. In real life, the individual writers of the Serapion circle followed different artistic directions (Zamiatin mentions the critical reception of Vsevolod Ivanov as the 'new Gor'kii' in his article, \textit{Novaia russkaia proza});\textsuperscript{137} and within the context of the story as a whole the teacher-pupil relationship is certainly a complex one. Pamva is by no means a totally 'orthodox' figure: his eyes are able to penetrate clothing and thus he possesses the secrets of the
female form which he tries to deny the student under his tutelage. He is capable of curing 'infertility', a minor work of creativity in its own right - hence the odd sobriquet which appears alongside his name (Pamva-nerest). Moreover, he is open to suggestion as to the wisdom of a policy once it has been proven counterproductive.\(^{138}\) On one level the narrative demands to be interpreted as a parable about the formal or informal guiding of the creative process. From the very beginning, Pamva is engaged in a selfless attempt to protect the innocent Erasmus from 'devilish' influences, as well as to ensure that his potentially dangerous gift does not infect those around him - in this sense, he is executing the task recommended by Bishop Zamutii of Tulumbas, namely, to nurture talent for certain purposes only while at the same time endeavouring to neutralise any potentially menacing impact. Paradoxically, the moment Erasmus' gift ceases to be troublesome for the community is the moment when Pamva wisely allows him full access to the mysteries he seeks to explore; in effect, the acquisition of forbidden fruit makes the fruit somehow less enticing. A further paradox awaits the reader on reaching the story's conclusion: we discover that the story of Erasmus is the work of an 'unworthy scribe', Innocent, who has been commissioned by other elders in the monastery to record everything that has happened for their 'instruction' and 'edification'; thus the story's very own didactic message is deemed too unorthodox and subversive to be offered to the ordinary members of the community. On the one hand, the text of \textit{Inok Erazm} itself is placed beyond the boundaries of 'acceptable art' and becomes an example of the heretical influence from which Erasmus is finally purged; and on the other,
readers are given a disturbing sense of collaborative privilege. Through the act of reading and possessing such a manuscript they automatically become one of the 'trusted elders' permitted to read the narrative because of their supposed wisdom and sophistication. By virtue of publication, moreover, the text offers proof that a dangerous narrative can be absorbed without difficulty, assuming that the reader, like the holy Pamva, draws the 'correct' conclusions.

\[O \textit{chude, proissshedshem v \textit{Pepel’nuiu Sredu}}\]

Although \textit{Inok Erazm} is an exercise in mock veneration, at no point is the mask of style permitted to slip from the narrator's grasp - somewhat in the manner of \textit{Zenitsa-deva}, although not nearly as experimental or primitive in its use of archaic language, it is a triumph of modulated style which preserves throughout the illusion of an Orthodox document, at least on the surface level of the text.

The same, however, cannot be said of Zamiatin's third experiment in the hagiographic genre - a surreal, grotesque comedy, completed in July 1923, but not published until two and a half years later in Isaac Lezhnev's journal, \textit{Novaia Rossiia}. Unlike its predecessors, \textit{Pepel’naia Sreda} does not attempt the stylistic conceit of a medieval narrator. The language, spelling and syntax are recognisably modern; so, too, is the setting. The narrative deploys some sophisticated, novelistic devices, such as the deliberate retardation of the opening chapter, which keeps the
reader in a state of suspense while the 'miracle' is first being discussed (well after it has actually occurred in real time), and the mock revelation of the final paragraph, which seems to confirm superficially what has been implied deviously throughout. Undeniably, the adoption of such devices belongs properly to Zamiatin's mature style, thus making it hard to speak of Paradnaia Sreda in terms of stylistic 'performance'. As an adaptation - Alex Shane considers the story 'in all probability a parody of some ribald, medieval Czech tale about the evil powers of the Devil...' (more will be said about this in due course)\textsuperscript{140} - this tale is considerably more modern than both Zenitsa-deva and Inok Erazm in terms of linguistic texture. However, as far as the defining characteristic of hagiographic writing is concerned - the subject matter - Paradnaia Sreda charts a familiar course through the stock themes of saintliness, sexual temptation and miraculous event, all the while 'lauding' the main protagonist and appearing to present an 'edificatory' message to the reader. The very rank of the main protagonist - a canon (kanonik) - might be read as a pun on the root from which the word canonization is taken; moreover, in the manner of the traditional hagiographer, Zamiatin intervenes early in the text as author-narrator to tell the reader about the remarkable nature of the events about to be described (the degree of surprise expressed, however, is adjusted for modern sensibilities).\textsuperscript{141} Ultimately, the absence of linguistic stylization or obvious ecclesiastical mask simply serves to warn the reader that Paradnaia Sreda is a subversion of a modern hagiographic text, rather than a medieval one.
The essence of this story's uncanny quality lies partly in the incongruity between the event described and the modern setting in which it takes place. Coming to *Pepel’ naia Sreda* from the earlier parodies set in Russia, the reader is unsettled by the unfamiliar surroundings. The background purports to be that of a Benedictine monastery in Czechoslovakia, Poland or Germany, and the reader finds himself listening to a young canon and a doctor discussing a supposed miracle which neither of them is able to explain from the scientific point of view. The nature of this miracle is only gradually revealed during the course of the narrative. The reader learns that during mass to celebrate the festival of the Apostle Peter-in-Chains - that is to say, August 1st - the young canon Simplicius begins to feel faint at the moment when he raises the bread at Eucharist. A few months of nervous fretting later, he is examined by his friend, Dr Wojciech, and apparently found to be pregnant. The doctor decides to operate immediately. On Ash Wednesday Simplicius is wheeled into his friend's surgery and made to wait briefly alongside a woman expecting her fourth child, after which he receives a general anaesthetic. Regaining consciousness the next morning, he is appalled to discover that he has allegedly given birth to a baby boy; at the same time, he learns that the poor woman with him earlier in the waiting-room has died. Dr. Wojciech advises Simplicius to pretend that the boy belonged to her and that he has adopted him out of a sense of charity. This is the act of generosity for which the young canon becomes venerated in later years, and which provides the hagiographic impulse for the present account. On Simplicius' deathbed, however, we learn that the child had a real father: Archbishop Benedict, the head of the
monastery, who had returned from a visit to Rome and entertained Simplicius with wine and lobster only seven days before the mass took place. The story concludes with the disturbing sight of Dr. Wojciech laughing through tears as his former patient drifts off quietly into eternal sleep.

In a letter to Lev Lunts, a member of the Serapion Brothers, written not long after the story was completed, Zamiatin described *Pepel'naia Sreda* as an 'indecorous tale' conceived during the summer, the season when the 'powers of the libido' are at their peak. Its immediate target, however, is not at all easy to decipher. Readers initially seemed bewildered by the tale, a common reaction being to interpret it merely as an exercise in absurdity and a playful obfuscation for its own sake aimed primarily at the Orthodox Church. This is the line taken by modern scholars, few of whom have subjected the text to close textual analysis. Assuming that the story is supposed to convey meaning, and does not set out merely to stake its claim as a nonsense text challenging the increasing 'seriousness' of literature in the 1920s, there are at least three rational lines of inquiry which could be pursued to explain the occurrence of the miracle. One explanation, arguably the most logical, but one which undoubtedly strains the limits of credulity, is that Zamiatin's humble protagonist is not a young man at all, but a young woman - in other words, like the main character in Johann Jacob Grimmelshausen's famous seventeenth-century novel, with whom he shares a first name, Simplicius might well be so perfectly ignorant of life generally that he is unaware even of his own gender. Although this stretches the bounds of the incredible, it
is certainly implied at several intervals in the course of the narrative. At no juncture, for example, is objective proof of the young canon's masculinity furnished by the narrator; quite the opposite, in fact. A number of knowing remarks are made in relation to Simplicius which stress his total naivety and effeminate qualities, thus bringing his gender into question. We are told that he is wide-eyed and innocent, his eyes described as 'two little babes with thumbs in their mouths' (476); that he has fetching dimples which make him 'extremely engaging' to those who know him (the Archbishop is singled out for special mention in this context); and that he has a plumpish body, compared to a chair in a women's bedroom - 'upholstered in pink satin, full of warm folds, and alive - almost ready to replace the mistresses who normally occupy them.' According to the artistic logic of the narrative, only Dr Wojciech and the Archbishop need be aware of Simplicius' true gender; indeed, an indication that Wojciech colludes in the young canon's ignorance is given fairly early in the story when he first asks Simplicius to undress so that he can examine the bulge in his stomach - this is followed by a sharp reaction and a slight smile, which suggests that something is amiss:

Doktor Voichek ostree zakrutil svoi ryzhie rozhki, popolz k usham ulybkoi. No cherez minutu - ser' ezen, nagnulsia, prilozhil ukho k obitomu rozovym shelkom telu, poschupal zhivot (477).

This can be read either as an indication of his surprise with regard to Simplicius' swollen stomach, or a hint of the doctor's
realization that his friend is actually female. Could it be knowledge of the canon's bizarre secret which prompts the doctor's hysterical laughter at the very end of the story?

The plausibility of such an interpretation is certainly strengthened by the fact that mistaken sexual identity and mysterious illegitimate birth are the central themes of a number of Saints' Lives. For instance, there are several hagiographic accounts of female saints who run away from home in order to avoid marriage and the loss of their virginity, later disguising themselves in men's clothing to avoid detection and serving successfully in communities of monks until discovered to be female on their death-beds; not infrequently, they find themselves accused of seducing other women or nuns. One such celebrated instance is the Life of St. Margaret (feast day, 8 October), a young woman who enters a monastery disguised as a man, is rewarded for her uncommon devotion by being placed in charge of a neighbouring convent, and is later accused of seducing one of the nuns under her care. Another example, one better known in Russia during the nineteenth century because of the adaptation of her Life by the radical thinker Aleksandr Herzen in Legenda o sv. Feodore (1836), is the story of Saint Theodora (feast day, 11 September). A stock theme in this type of legend involves the (female) monk being amorously pursued by another woman, one who labours under a gross and almost comic misapprehension with regard to her true identity. In the case of Theodora, she is solicited by the daughter of an abbot from a neighbouring monastery who, angered by the handsome young monk's refusal to sleep with her, jealously accuses him of
responsibility for a later pregnancy. Theodora's protestations of innocence are not believed by the authorities. She is banished beyond the monastery walls as punishment and forced to bring up the illegitimate child on her own; indeed, it is only after her death, when burial preparations reveal that she is a woman after all, and thus incapable of impregnating anyone, that she receives proper vindication. It is worth recalling that in his adaptation of this legend Herzen used ignorance of Theodora's true gender as a device to increase dramatic tension. The true nature of her secret is implied discreetly on several occasions, but only revealed unambiguously towards the very end of the tale (naturally, this conceit relied on Herzen's supposition that the legend was not already known to the majority of his readers).\textsuperscript{150}

It is not suggested here that Simplicius is akin to the errant monks of this hagiographic tradition - these young virgins were obviously well aware of their gender, even if they sought to disguise it - merely that there is a tradition of sexual ambiguity and falsely attributed pregnancy in the Lives which Zamiatin may have been consciously parodying. It is intriguing that, as for Herzen, the device of gradual revelation is a key dramatic element in the plot: as we have seen, various nudges and winks are given during the course of the narrative which seem to suggest that Simplicius is not a young man, but a young woman; and these hints are seemingly confirmed by his death-bed confession to his son Felix, a confession which, while ostensibly revealing the identity of the boy's father (Archbishop Benedict) also indirectly constitutes admission and recognition of his own true sex:
Ty, veroiatno, dumal, Feliks, chto ia - tvoi otets. Tak vot: ia - tvoia mat', a tvoi otets - pokoinyi arkhiepiskop Benedikt' (481).

If we read Simplicius as a young woman, then *Pepel'naia Sreda* assumes the dimensions of an unusual and grotesque parody of the Virgin Birth. It is noteworthy that on two occasions, both of them significant junctures in the text, Simplicius raises an exclamation in the name of the Blessed Virgin. The first occurs when Dr. Wojciech examines his belly for the first time and announces that he will have to operate - 'Chto u menia takoe... radi Devy Marii! (478), he says; while the second takes place when he is presented in hospital with the child to which he has supposedly given birth - 'No ved' ia zhe... Presviataia Deva! - ved' ia zhe vse-taki muzhchina!' (480), he exclaims. The potential syntactical ambiguity in this example is indicative of Simplicius' sexual androgyyny; furthermore, the doctor has previously employed the word 'chastity' (*tselomudrie* [477]) in relation to the canon's reluctance to disrobe. For much of the story the narrator implies that because this pregnancy has no scientific explanation it is therefore a miracle in much the same way as the impregnation of the Virgin Mary occurs through the divine offices of the Holy Spirit. The story plays deliberately on the modern disinclination to believe in such miracles and much humour is derived from a comic reversal which juxtaposes the canon's relative scepticism towards such occurrences, in spite of his religion, with the 'scientist' doctor's relatively relaxed acceptance:
The irony is doubly felicitous here. It seems absurd that a young canon reared on the articles of faith of the Catholic Church should have overlooked the celebrated story of the Virgin Birth in his wish to explain the pregnancy. On the other hand, he might have been reluctant to do so since technically the assumption is blasphemous. Additional humour is derived retrospectively when the reader recalls Simplicius' question to Dr. Wojciech regarding the historical precedents for such an occurrence at the very beginning of the tale:


Of course, Simplicius is referring to medical books, but the alert reader will think immediately of 'books' in the Biblical sense (the final reference to 'antiquity' makes the allusion explicit). When the reader learns finally that Archbishop Benedict is the father, the Biblical myth is exploded and the supposedly inexplicable miracle revealed to have a normal, biological explanation after all.

A second line of inquiry involves accepting Simplicius as a young man, albeit a rather effeminate one. This reading assumes that his confession to Felix at the end of the story reflects not so much
an admission of his own true gender, but the inescapable fact that since he gave birth to the boy, he must therefore, technically speaking, be his 'mother'. According to this reading, the birth of Felix is a miraculous event indeed, so miraculous in fact that no logical or biological explanation can be offered at all, and the tale acquires the hallmarks of a dark, scurrilous fantasy, a truly grotesque parody of the Virgin Birth with the sex of the 'virgin' obscenely reversed. It remains only for the reader to speculate on the possibility that Simplicius has been in some way bizarrely punished for an illicit, homosexual encounter with the Archbishop, the true nature of which he is more or less ignorant, perhaps because he had drunk too much white wine. Certainly, the title of the story hints that punishment for past sins might well be a central theme. Ash Wednesday (Pepel'naia Sreda) is the day in the Western calendar when Christians celebrate the beginning of Jesus' forty days in the wilderness by marking their foreheads with a cross of ash, a symbolic gesture undertaken in recognition of their sins. Wojciech himself speculates on the possibility that the child has been conceived as a punishment and should best be viewed as a 'test' (ispytanie [480]) of the canon's faith. This seems to be recognised even by Simplicius himself. At the very beginning of the story, as Wojciech inquires about the health of the Archbishop between drawing on his cigarette, Simplicius' guilty embarrassment is compared to being roasted alive like a woodcock on a spit - a clichéd image of hellish torture which is not without a certain homo-erotic dimension (it is instructive that the Archbishop's 'favourable disposition' towards Simplicius is mentioned virtually in the same breath). It is also with a certain sense of guilt - likened to the admission of sins in
the confession box \((na\ ispovedi\ [476])\) - that he first tells Dr. Wojciech of the events preceding his sudden illness, in other words, the small party thrown by the Archbishop to celebrate his return from Rome. Later, after the birth of the baby boy, Simplicius is said humbly to bear his burden precisely because he understands why God might have chosen him for such punishment, and he is compared to the Apostle Peter:

\[\text{Kanonik prinial eto i nes tak zhe pokorno, kak apostol Petr svoi verigi. Emu kazalos' dazhe, chto on znaet, za chto nebo tak nakazalo i nagradilo ego (480).}\]

It is not inconceivable that Zamiatin intended his story as a satirical skit on the sexual ignorance and homosexuality rife in Catholic monasteries, with the ambivalent nature of Simplicius' gender serving to enhance the grotesque nature of Felix's birth. Since it is biologically impossible for men to conceive children, however, \textit{Pepel'naia Sreda} according to this reading loses any semblance of logical coherence and becomes instead an experiment in absurdity. On the other hand, still assuming that Simplicius is a young man, logicality can be restored to the text if we believe that the boy, although obviously sired by the Archbishop (the description of his 'enormous forehead' leaves little room for doubt [480]), belongs in fact to the poor woman who dies under the knife, rather than to Simplicius himself. This reading implies that Dr. Wojciech has taken the baby from the dead mother and passed it off as belonging to Simplicious as part of a bizarre and malicious joke. The fact that the doctor knows all about Benedict's fond affections for the canon is implied several
times during the course of the narrative, and the smile which plays constantly on his face suggests a joker perfectly capable of undertaking such an act of maleficium.

Developing this reading further, and adapting slightly Shane's proposal that *Pepel’naia Sreda* be interpreted as a parody of a Western Slavonic devil-tale, it is conceivable that Simplicius' pregnancy is the product, not of divine punishment for sin, but of devilish interference in the normal logic of events; in other words, the pregnancy is not genuine, merely phantom, and Simplicius does not give birth to the child at all, but is simply made to believe that he has done so. The doctor's green eyes, russet-red forelocks, which resemble horns, and unnerving smile are undeniably Mephistophelian in quality; indeed, the 'demonic' side of his character is revealed explicitly in the hospital scene.\textsuperscript{152} It is significant that the doctor plays on Simplicius' ignorance and naivety in order to induce in him a sense of guilt and responsibility for events which may have a simple explanation. Indeed, despite the young canon's admission of guilt to his son Felix at the end of the story, there is no proof of 'sinful' activity on the day of the Archbishop's return from Rome; on the contrary, it could all be part of a subtle strategy of insinuation on the part of the doctor which plays continually on Simplicius' suspicion that he must somehow have lapsed morally, and therefore must be guilty of *something*, even if he is not quite sure of what. According to this line of reasoning, the pregnancy could be a phantom pregnancy, a phenomenon known medically as *couvade*, in so far as it affects husbands of wives who are pregnant. The caesarian operation in question is conducted while
Simplicius is under anaesthetic - thus it is only the doctor who can testify to its authenticity. The baby, also, is delivered while the young canon is still unconscious, and it is perfectly conceivable that the doctor could have taken the child from the woman in the hospital and presented it to Simplicius as if it were his own. Even the fact that the child is born with Archbishop Benedict's 'huge, wise forehead' (479) indicates only that he is the father, not that Simplicius is necessarily the 'mother'. Furthermore, we know that the woman in question attends services in the same monastery in which Simplicius and the Archbishop are based and feels ill on exactly the same day, 1 August, as the young canon. There are also two details which link this woman directly with Dr Wojciech. Firstly, there is the fact that she has enjoyed free treatment with him in the past, an indication, perhaps (bearing in mind the topos of Faustian pact in German literature), of a special understanding with mutual obligations and responsibilities. Secondly, there is the fact that the colour of her boots, which are russet-red and described along with her dead body in the aftermath of Simplicius' operation (479), matches the colour of the doctor's hair. The motive for the Wojciech's legerdemain is obscure, yet it is an explanation for the events in the story which restores logic to an otherwise puzzling text. Traditionally, it is the Devil's mission on earth to disrupt human affairs and corrupt the innocent. Is not Simplicius simply his latest victim?153

Undeniably, more questions can be posed than satisfactorily answered by this narrative - indeed, Zamiatin may have been enjoying himself hugely at the expense of the reader (and, by
implication, the censor). Moving beyond purely logical lines of inquiry, and trying to decipher any coded messages, is equally complex. There are several details in the narrative which appear unrelated to the central theme, and yet are unlikely to be insignificant. The twice-repeated reference to the festival of the Apostle Peter-in-Chains, an event celebrated to commemorate the apostle's miraculous escape from the prison of Herod Agrippa, endows the text with a nominal 'liberation' theme.\textsuperscript{154} It should also be noted in this context that the dates in the story are not without personal resonance for Zamiatin himself at this juncture: he was arrested briefly in August 1922, spent the next few months desperately lobbying officials in order to be allowed to leave the country, and was officially issued with a passport in February 1923, only to find that he was unable to meet the one-week deadline given for his forced departure - thus he was still seeking permission to emigrate when \textit{Pepel'naia Sreda} was written.\textsuperscript{155} This evidence is potentially intriguing in light of the travel theme which emerges in the story, by which I mean not only that the story is set in an unspecified foreign country, but that travelling abroad in a westwards direction is associated by Dr. Wojciech with the 'continuation of life' and the avoidance of future 'punishment'.\textsuperscript{156} Other suggestive details include the first names of the main protagonists and their meaning in Latin: 'Felix', which means 'happiness' or 'felicity'; 'Simplicius', meaning 'simple' (from \textit{simplex}); and 'Benedict', from \textit{benedictio}, meaning a 'blessing' or 'boon'. There is the persistent repetition of the word \textit{mladenets} in relation both to Simplicius and Felix, the final use of which suggests that Simplicius is still a young child when he dies (significantly, he dies in February, the same month in which
Felix was born. Then there is the sinister presence of the young woman at the moment Simplicius starts to feel ill in church and at the moment he actually gives birth - a curious parallel which, while it certainly contributes to the development of the plot (Simplicius can claim publicly that Felix has been adopted) seems artistically redundant unless it possesses some other, possibly allegorical significance.

Bearing in mind the fact that birth often functions symbolically in literature to signify the dawning of a new era, or the occurrence of an event with momentous implications, there are motifs and image-patterns in *Pepel´naia Sreda* which are equally suggestive and not without their echo in the political developments of the time. One such pattern involves the idea of 'postponement'; another, interrelated pattern concerns food and food-related guilt complexes. As already noted, travelling westwards is made synonymous in *Pepel´naia Sreda* with the attempt to prolong life, which in turn becomes a means of postponing death and avoiding 'judgment'. Simplicius' operation, symbolically, involves embarking on a journey, the destination of which he is not quite sure. He fears that this journey will end with death, and therefore the Last Judgment, and thus tries to secure special treatment by distributing all the money at his disposal to the woman lying next to him in the waiting room. Dr. Wojciech's response to this scene - 'Chto, zapasaetes´ v dorogu dobrymi delami?' (479) - is revealing; indeed, his use of the verb *zapasat´sia* here - meaning, literally, 'to stock up', and conventionally employed for items of consumption - is interesting in the light of the other pattern in the narrative, namely, the eating of food. Food is associated
throughout the story with feelings of guilt; simultaneously, while the physical swelling of the stomach is linked to pregnancy, it can also be interpreted literally as an indication of good or healthy living. The first mention of food is the woodcock roasting on a spit, with its transparently hellish connotations (475). The second is the langoustine dished up along with sparkling white wine during the Archbishop's soirée, reminding the young canon of the moment when his sinful act was supposedly committed (since it is as 'rosy-pink as a young baby', the shellfish is associated symbolically with Felix and Simplicius). The moment when the young canon feels ill for the first time coincides with the ritual of Eucharist - a sacred act of worship which involves the blessing and subsequent eating and drinking of bread and wine as symbolic representations of Christ's body and blood (a ritual, we should note, which derives originally from the Last Supper). Simplicius' pregnancy is punctuated by repeated mention of the 'heaviness' (tiazhest') in his stomach, although his increasing rotundity (he is already fairly plump at the beginning of the tale) is attributed by those around him to overindulgence. The outcome of this pregnancy follows the day after Shrove Tuesday - an officially sanctioned occasion for gluttony - and coincides with the beginning of the Lenten Fast. Lastly, as Simplicius lies in the hospital ward anxiously awaiting the operation, his doctor frames his eventual recovery in terms of the langoustine which he will again be able to eat at the Archbishop's table (479).

It may seem unnecessarily reductive to seek parallels for *Pepel'naia Sreda* with the political situation at the beginning of the 1920s, yet the existence of such a parallel makes sense of
certain aspects of the story which are troublesome and enigmatic. One clue to the nature of this event can be found in the statement that whereas the birth of Felix was a new 'beginning' for Simplicius, for the woman lying next to him in the hospital it signalled the 'end'. Further clues lie concealed in the month during which Felix is born, the importance of the food generally in the story, and the use of the colour red in connection with the langoustine and Felix himself. February was the month in which Lenin announced the beginnings of a new policy towards grain requisitioning which was later to evolve into the New Economic Policy. As E. H. Carr points out, Lenin was not the actual author of this policy, and had been more or less forced to accept it by the pressure of events. The initial proposal had been presented in the form of a food tax by Trotsky to the Politburo in February 1920 prior to the ninth party congress, but it was rejected by a majority which included Lenin. The Mensheviks and left-wing SRs made a similar proposal during the Tenth All-Russian Congress of Soviets in December 1920, but this too was resisted by the Bolshevik majority as a sell-out to petty capitalism. Nevertheless, the end of the civil war, the unpopularity of requisitioning, which was giving rise to outbreaks of peasant unrest, and the alarming deterioration in the supply of food led to approval being granted exactly one year after Trotsky's original proposal at a Politburo meeting on 8 February 1921. Lenin framed a discussion document to be placed before the tenth party congress, and this was followed by a public airing of the food tax proposal in two issues of Pravda on February 17 and 26. The apologetic tone in Lenin's subsequent speeches gave rise to the impression that this policy was, in the words of Carr, a
'temporary evil to be overcome as quickly as possible, a blot to be erased from the party scutcheon.' Clearly, it was an abandonment of socialist principle and for this reason was regarded by the rank and file with uncertainty and anxiety. For many, it was an embarrassment, a sacrilegious volte-face, a humiliating betrayal of principle, and a 'capitulation' to the forces of free trade and the petty bourgeoisie; for others, it was a temporary expedient, to be abandoned at the first possible moment. The surprise was universal, and many accepted it only with an uneasy conscience.

Many of the reactions to NEP, and the fundamental paradox which lay at its heart, are echoed in Pepel'naia Sreda, albeit in disguise. The horror with which Simplicius learns of the miraculous birth, and his adoption of Felix as a burden which he must carry as submissively as the Apostle Peter his chains, are evocative of the embarrassment and humiliation of Lenin's volte-face. It is not inconceivable that Zamiatin intended a pun on Simplicius' status as 'canon' (kanonik) and the word for a rule, an ecclesiastical law or decree, or a general rule and edict (kanon). Furthermore, if we read the story as a mock-edificatory tale about the machinations and manipulations of a Devil who sows confusion and causes black to be mistaken for white, then the satirical resonance of Pepel'naia Sreda becomes more transparent. Simplicius gives birth to a 'red child' (krasnyi mladenets) which is not, technically speaking, his own. The birth is linked to the notion of getting fatter and the consumption of food. It is also associated with the resurrection of the past (Dr Wojciech suggests that the birth, however mysterious and
enigmatic, is no more miraculous than the 'resurrection of the dead' [480]). The young woman, whose depiction as an enormous, inflated 'spider' (pauk) aligns her symbolically with the exploiting classes whom the Bolsheviks sought to exterminate, is giving birth for the third time (the food tax is only accepted after two previous attempts). Simplicius, feeling guilty towards this woman, opens his purse and gives her money, a charitable deed which is designed to secure his reputation in a future reckoning. The 'pregnancy' is symbolically associated with the Eucharist (the blessing of bread) and a time of year, the month of August, which is conventionally linked with the beginning of the harvest season. The woman's use of the verbs rozhat' and rezat', meaning 'to give birth' and, literally, 'to cut' (here referring to the need to operate), can also be applied colloquially to the producing and harvesting of wheat. Even the saint to whom the festival of Apostle Peter-in-Chains is dedicated - Christ's disciple, Simon Peter - is famous for the individual responsibility bestowed on him by Jesus to 'feed' his disciples. The entire event is a blessing - hence the Archbishop's participation - and gives rise to 'happiness' (Felix). But it is also a mysterious phenomenon, an unnatural and paradoxical event which cannot be explained, not even by the authoritative tomes in Dr. Wojciech's possession, because in the political history of humanity nothing like this had ever happened before.
iSee Evgenii Zamiatin, Izbrannye proizvedeniia, compiled by A. Galushkin, op. cit. Henceforth, for the sake of simplicity, I shall refer to these stories respectively as Zenitsa-deva, Inok Erazm and Pepel’naia Sreda, the texts of which, unless otherwise stated, are taken from the Neimanis edition. The dates given in brackets here refer to the years when the stories first appeared in print, although the reasons for the disparities between the time when they were actually written and the time when they were first published will be analysed in due course.

2Definitions of hagiographie writing vary, although the modern view tends to stress the diversity of the genre: 'The differences are so great that one cannot make generalizations about what a "typical" hagiographic work might be, although one can make broad statements about hagiography as a literary genre. The definition found in a standard modern dictionary, "biography of saints", is inadequate because not all hagiographic narratives are full biographies (...). Hagiography is a curiously amorphous genre which may be defined only by subject-matter, not by form or style (...).' And again: 'It is an account in either verse or prose which describes the lives, or incidents therefrom, deaths, or miracles of saints. The accounts (...) all have some underlying polemical purpose.' See Alexandra Hennessey Olsen, "De Historiis Sanctorum": A Generic Study of Hagiography', Genre, XIII, 1980, 4, pp. 407-29 [p. 424].

3'The genre has two objectives: the one, devotional, to honour the saint; the other, instructive, to explain to the hearer or reader the significance for Christian truth of the saint and his life'. Charlotte D'Evelyn, in her review of Wolpers' Die englische Heiligenlegende des Mittelaltets, cited in Alison Goddard Elliott, Roads to Paradise: the Lives of the Early Saints, Hanover and London, 1987, p. 3.


5See, for example, Kheruvimy (1917), Angel Dormidon (1918) and Tserkov’bozhia (1922) in Evg. Zamiatin, Bol’shim detiam
skazki (1922), reprinted in Neimanis (I, 495, I, 488-90 & III, 94-95 respectively).

6See Ziolkowski's introduction in her Hagiography and Modern Russian Literature, op. cit., pp. 3-33.

7Lampl discusses Leskov's reworking of the Russian Prologue legends in terms of the stylistically 'unmarked' (nichtmarkierten) and 'neutral' (neutralen) language of contemporary Realism. See Lampl, 'Altrussisch-kirchenslawische Stilisierung bei Remizov und Zamjatin', op. cit., p. 132.

8Limonar', from the Greek, leimon, meaning 'a moist, grassy place', refers to an early Byzantine collection of hagiographic accounts written by Bishop Sophronius of Jerusalem on the subject of various holy figures of the early Church, in particular, the desert saints. In common with various collections of early Byzantine literature in Russian translation, this collection was published in Kiev in 1628 under the title of Limonar', sirech' Tsvetnik ottsa nashego Sofroniia patriarkha ierusalimskogo, sostavlennyi Ioannom ieromonakhom. See Entsiklopedicheskii slovar', op. cit., vol. XXXVIIa, 1898, pp. 858-59. Remizov first published his adaptations of these accounts in 1907, but his collection of stories was expanded for volume seven of the eight-volume Sochineniia, issued in St. Petersburg in 1912. See Remizov, Bibliographie, op. cit., pp. 26-27 & 37-38. Paralipomenon, from the Greek, paraleipo, meaning 'to leave unnoticed', was published in volume seven of the Sochineniia edition (ibid., p. 38) and refers to the two historical books of the Old Testament believed to have followed after Kings, but omitted because of doubts about their authenticity and authorship. See Polnyi pravoslavnyi slovar', op. cit., vol. 2, col. 1759. Tsep' zlataia, the title in reverse of another collection of early Byzantine literature (Zlataia tsep'), first appeared in Sirin, 1913, no. 1. See Remizov, Bibliographie, op. cit., pp. 44 & 106. Zamiatin reviewed this volume in 1914 and referred to the Remizov stories contained within them in 'Sirin. Sbornik pervyi i vtoroi' (IV, 499).

9Lampl., op. cit., p. 136. Chto est' tabak was reprinted along with three other satirical tales in Zavetnye skazy by the Alkonost publishing house in 1920 while Zamiatin was working there as a
senior editor. For information regarding his editorial activities at this time, see Shane, op. cit., p. 41. For details relating to the publication history of *Chto est' tabak*, see Georges Nivat, 'Le Puritanisme russe, pourquoi?', in *Amour et érotisme dans la littérature russe du XXe siècle*, Bern, Berlin, Frankfurt/M., New York, Paris, Vienna, 1992, pp. 30-38 [p. 34].

In a letter to Remizov dated April 22 (Old Style) 1916, Zamiatin complained about the mix-up over the publication of *Kriazhi*, which had appeared both in the Easter issue of *Rech* and in the selection of his short stories published under the title *Uezdnoe* (1916). The implication is that Remizov had been in some way responsible for this embarrassing situation. Zamiatin ends the letter by asking Remizov 'how things are standing' with the two stories *Afrika* and *Zenitsa-deva*. See 'Pisma E. I. Zamiatina A. M. Remizovu', op. cit., pp. 177-78.

'Stilisierung funktioniert dabei prinzipiell auf Grund ihrer "Differenzqualität", gegen den Hintergrund einer zeitgenössischen sprachlichen Erwartungsnormal (die um die Jahrhundertwende wohl mit der überlieferten Erzählsprache des Realismus gleichzusetzen ist).' ('Stylization functions, then, principally on the basis of its "quality of being different" against the background of an expected contemporary linguistic norm [which at the turn of the century can be equated with the traditional narrative language of Realism]). My translation from the German. See Lampl, op. cit., p. 131.

ibid., p. 145.


Cited in the introduction to *The Golden Legend of Jacobus de Voragine*, op. cit., p. x.

'A high degree of authenticity and historical fact is a rather rare element in the huge whole of earlier hagiographical literature. We find myth, folklore, legend, and romantic and edifying fiction; this is not unlike many historical novels.' See *The Penguin Dictionary of Saints*, op. cit., p. 12.
See Ziolkowski, op. cit., p. 23.

"Stilisierendes Erzählen wendet sich bekanntlich im Prinzip an einen eingeschränkten, gewöhnlich intellektuellen Leserkreis, für welchen Lesevergnügen zu einem Teil auch das Vergnügen an sprachlichen und stilistischen Spielsituationen ist; nicht selten sind die Adressaten stilisierenden und parodierenden Erzählens ihrerseits Literaten." ('Stylized narratives are intended, as is known, principally for a limited, usually intellectual circle of readers, for whom the pleasure of reading is to an extent also the pleasure in linguistic and stylistic performance situations; the readers of stylized and parodied narratives are frequently writers themselves'). My translation from the German. See Lampl, op. cit., p. 143.

See 'Evgenii Zamiatin: "K razrusheniiu ravnovesiiia... "', op. cit., pp. 115 & 116. A reference to Tikhon of Zadonsk appears in Uezdnoe (I, 58), while Serafim of Sarov is mentioned in Spodruhnitsa greshnykh (I, 390).

See 'O iazyke', op. cit., p. 83.

'Esli vy poprobuete sranit' staroobriadcheskie tserkovnoslavianskie pameiatniki s pravoslavnymy - vy uvidite, kakaiia bol'shaia raznitsa mezhdu nimi - i raznitsa ne v pol'zu pravoslavnykh knig. Ob'iasniaetsia eto tem, chto pri Petre Velikom tserkovnye knigi i, v chastnosti, Chet'i-Minei, byli peresmotrany i prozenszurovany, vernee - izurodovany. Bylo vykinuto opisanie tselego riada ocharovatel'nogo-sobraznykh chudes - u godu narozhdavshemusia pozitvnomu dukhy; byl vykinut tselyi riad liubovnykh epizodov, potomu chto podchas vse eti soblazny i padeniia sviatykh izlagal'sia v slovakh primitivno-grubym i otkrovennykh, i vykinal'sia prosto drevnie, krepkie slova - i zamenalis' bolee novymi.' See ibid.

Dmitrii compiled his Menaea from 1685 to 1705 on the basis of two sources: the Vitae Sanctorum Orientis et Occidentis, a Latin adaptation of the Greek versions of the Lives as recorded by Simon Metaphrastes; and the Acta Sanctorum, which were rigorously compiled by the Bollandists, a society of Jesuit scholars who devoted themselves to a scientific study of the Lives. They were pioneers of the 'systematic critical' approach whose
aesthetic inclinations were profoundly hostile to all unverifiable facts, especially miracles. See George Florovsky, _Puti russkogo bogoslovia_, Paris, 1937, pp. 54-55.

23See 'Vstrechi s B. M. Kustodieyym' (IV, 169).

24'Eshe: ego zhizn' - eto "zhitie", a sam on - podvizhnik, takoi zhe, kakikh v staroe vremia znala ego liubimaia Rus'. S toi tol'ko raznitsei, chto ego podvig byl ne vo imia spasenia dushi, a vo imia iskusstva. Illarion-Zatvornik, Afanasii-Sidiashchii, Nil-Stolbenskii-Sidiashchii, i vot v nashi dni - eshe odin "zatvornik" i "sidiashchii".' See ibid.


26Iampl, op. cit., p. 133.

27'Zamiatin liubit i znaet, kak malo kto iz russikh pisatelei (i v etom, byt' mozhet, tol'ko v etom, on blizok k Remizovu), russkuiu starinu, tserkovnye obriady, otecheskie predaniiia. No sam po prirode svoei on skoree skeptik, on liubit ne vechnuiu sushchnost' pravoslaviia, a istoricheskie formy ego.' See I. Golenishchev-Kutuzov, 'Evgenii Zamiatin', _Russkaia slovesnost'_, 6, 1994, p. 19.

28'Eretiki - edinstvennoe (gor'koe) lekarstvo ot entropii chelovecheskoi mysli.' See 'O literature, revoliutsii i entropii' (IV, 292).

29In his article on Kustodieyev, Zamiatin compared the tasteful designs used to illustrate _Inok Erazm_ with the 'primitive, crude' erotica of Konstantin Somov. See 'Vstrechi s B. M. Kustodieyym' (IV, 169).

Zenitsa-deva was first published on 15 October (Old Style) 1917 - see 'Vozvrashchenie Evgeniia Zamiatina', op. cit., p. 54. All subsequent references, unless otherwise stated, are to the version published in the Neimanis edition (III, 64-67). It should be noted that a meaningful translation of the heroine's name - Zenitsa-deva - causes problems. Literally, it means 'Pupil-Virgin', but the symbolism of the term is unclear, unless it can be taken to refer to the Virgin Mary, described as the 'apple of her parents' eye' (zenitsa oka) in Dmitrii of Rostov's Life of her parents, Joachim and Anne (feast day, 9 September). See 'Zhitie sviatykh i pravednykh bogootets Ioakima i Anny' in Dmitrii of Rostov's Zhitiia Sviatykh na russkom iazyke izlozhenny po rukovodstvu Chet'ikh-minei sv. Dimitriia Rostovskogo s dopolneniiami iz Prologa, twelve volumes, Moscow, 1903-1911, vol. 1, 1903, pp. 185-192 [p. 185]. Perhaps with this in mind Shane opts for 'Precious Virgin', and I have opted to follow him in this. See Shane, op. cit., p. 25.


See Evgenii Zamiatin, Izbrannye proizvedeniia, op. cit., pp. 528-31. The difference relates to the following archaisms (the Galushkin edition, already cited, is in brackets): s' rozhdennyi (otrozhdennyi) chervonna (chervlena), skorpii (skarpii), polyni (pelynia), uslazhadel'nymi (uslazhatel'nymi), lishi mechenoi (liashi mochenoi), nevosstanovenna (nevostiagnovenna). Some of the above-mentioned discrepancies may have arisen as a result of typographical errors, of which there are at least two in the Neimanis edition (gade instead of gady, and эллинскими instead of эллинскими [67]). It would appear that the respective editors have relied on two different versions of the story, most probably draft variants.

The archivists at IMLI have clearly mistaken the date of publication to be an approximate indication of the actual time of writing. I have not been granted access to the manuscripts themselves, but in the catalogue for the Zamiatin archive the
draft versions are all originally dated 1918: this date has been crossed out in all cases and replaced in pencil with the date 1917 on the basis of the publication in Delonaroda - see IMLI, fond 47, opis’ 1, ed. khr. 58-61.


36Lampl, op. cit., p. 143; and N. Franz, Groteske Strukturen in der Proza Zamjatins , Munich, 1980, p. 189. References to the Primary Chronicle are taken from the modern edition of the Povest’ vremennykh let , translated into modern Russian by D. Likhachev, op. cit. See also the opening lines of Istoriia odnogo goroda , in M. E. Saltykov-Shchedrin, Sobranie sochinenii , twenty volumes, Moscow, 1965-78, vol. 8, 1969, pp. 265-448.

37These are the English equivalents of the following words in Zamiatin’s text: dulebov’, rodimichskuiu, drevlianskuiu, severianskuiu, polianskuiu, meriu, ves’, chud’ (64 & 65). See the index in G. Vernadsky and M. Karpovich, A History of Russia . Volume 1: Ancient Russia , New Haven, 1943. Zamiatin’s adjective rodimichskii (65), also employed in the Galushkin edition, is a misspelling of radimichskii (Radimichian), the form used in the Primary Chronicle (p. 20) and by Vernadsky and Karpovich.

38For an example of archaic spelling, see skarpiia in the Galushkin edition (op. cit., p. 528, line 13), which is skorpiia in the Neimanis edition (page 64, line 13). The word, which means ‘scorpion’ (skorpion in modern Russian), is taken from the Greek skorpios, but the spelling of skarpiia derives from the Old Church Slavonic. See Sreznevskii, op. cit., vol. 3, col. 366. Zamiatin also adopts the Church Slavonic system of numbering which, following Byzantine practice, is signified by a series of letters. The letter M - given as the heroine’s age when she dies - signifies the number 40 (see the footnote to the Neimanis edition [67]). Nota bene: a different letter, ‘B’, is given in the Galushkin edition (op. cit., p. 531).

39The name Ulfil (64) is probably taken from Ulphila, or Wulfila, the Teutonic bishop who undertook the conversion of the Visigoths in the fourth century and translated the New Testament
into Gothic. Likewise, Erman-tsar' (65) is possibly an allusion to the fourth-century king of the Ostrogoths, Ermenrich (in Russian, Germanrikh). The Goths moved southwards from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea in the second century A.D.; however, in the middle of the fourth century the East Gothic tribes formed a strong federation under the aforesaid Ermenrich and set about subduing the neighbouring non-Gothic peoples. See ibid., pp. 118-20.

40See Olsen, op. cit., pp. 413-14. After the Roman persecutions were ended, this also applied to the confessor saints. See, for example, Nestor's eulogies for St. Anthony and St. Theodosius in the Kievo-Pecherskii Paterik, an unexpurgated version of which was translated into modern Russian by E. Poselianin in 1900, reprinted edition, Moscow, 1996, pp. 29-54 & 132-42.

41This was standard procedure for the publishers of obscene material in Russian. The first (emigré) publishers of Afanas'ev's collection of bawdy, anti-clerical tales, Russkie zavetnye skazki, claimed in a foreword to the edition that they had been originally found in a monastery - interestingly, from the point of view of Zamiatin's parodies, these tales were published legally in Russia for the first time only in 1912-13. See Greg Legman's introduction to the English language edition of the tales, Russian Secret Tales: Bawdy Folktales of Old Russia, New York, 1966, pp. v-x. Remizov, for instance, claimed that the author of his pornographic story Chto est' tabak was an ancient sage called Gonosii. See Nivat, op. cit., p. 34.

42See 'Pis' ma E. I. Zamiatina A. M. Remizovu', op. cit., p. 178. For the draft versions, see IMLI, fond 47, opis' 1, ed. khr. 58, 59, 60 & 61.

43N. Franz, op. cit., p. 188. I will be referring in the course of this chapter to the Revised Standard Version of Judith, as printed in the Old Testament 'Books called Apocrypha'.

44This is indicated by use of the capital letter at the beginning of the word meaning 'God' in Russian: 'Vlast' ia imeiu, no vlast' moia ne ot gotskikh bogov, nizhe ot merzkikh slovenskikh, no ot Boga moego' (64).

45'I eshche divilik' so strakhom, chto telo Zenitsy ne iskreplo, i miagko, i svetlo, i blagovonno' (67). It is worth comparing this

46St. Agatha (feast day, 5 February) is the most famous victim of this kind of torture and she is often depicted in art carrying her breasts on a dish (the resemblance of the shape of breasts to bells led to her adoption as a patron saint of bell-founders). See *The Penguin Dictionary of Saints*, op. cit., p. 32. See also the entry for St. Agatha in *The Golden Legend*, op. cit., pp. 157-61 [p. 159]. For a general discussion of breast-mutilation as a topos in the sacred legends of the virgin-martyrs, see Thomas J. Heffernan, *Sacred Biography. Saints and their Biographers in the Middle Ages*, New York, Oxford, 1988, p. 283.

47See the *Lives* of St. Agatha and St. Christine (feast day, 24 July) in *The Golden Legend*, op. cit., pp. 159-61 & 366-68 respectively. See also the *Lives* of St. Catherine (feast day, 24 November), St. Barbara (feast day, 4 December) and St. Anastasiia (feast day, 22 December) in *Kratkie svedeniia o prazdnikakh Pravoslavnoi tserkvi i skazaniia o zhiti osobennoo chitymykh Sviatykh*, first printed in 1892, reprinted edition, Moscow, 1991, pp. 71-76, 84-87 & 98-99 respectively. For a general discussion of the passio in terms of its narrative structure and topoi, see Elliott, op. cit., pp. 16-17.

48'(....) volosy zhe imela, kak venets zlatyi s' rozhdennyi, izzlata chervonna' (64).

49An indication of her virginal status is given in the line: 'I tak prebyvala Zenitsa brakoneiskusnoi devoi piat' let' (65). This is confirmed by Erman's later inquiry: ' - Gde zhe teper' tselomudrie tvoe dobrochestno, zapovedanno tebe veroi tvoei?' (66).

50Cited in *The Golden Legend*, op. cit., p. 161. It is also worth noting that the thirty days during which the Precious Virgin manages to secure peace is a common theme in the passiones.
The official persecutors try for thirty days to corrupt St. Agatha before bringing her to court - see ibid., p. 157; and St. Anastasiia is starved to death for thirty days during the attempt to persuade her to renounce her religion - see *Kratkie svedeniia*, op. cit., p. 99.

The version of this story which appears in Metropolitan Makarii's *Reading Menaea* involves a peasant having a nap after a hard morning's toil, during which a serpent slips into his open mouth and down into his stomach (*chrevo*). See *Velikie Minei Chet' i sobrannye vserossiskim mitropolitom Makariem, Noiabr*', *dni* 1-12, op. cit., col. 9.

Tlennoe teles ozloblenie oskorbit menia to r ko zdes', a tam - telesnoe nechestie v chest' mne budet, ibo gonimykh radi to sotvorila' (66).

For the Christian debate on the superiority of virginity and chastity over marriage, see the chapter entitled 'Virgin Mothers' in Heffernan, op. cit., pp. 299-321.


Ibid., p. 300. See also Ziolkowski's discussion of this story in her *Hagiography and Modern Russian Literature*, op. cit., pp. 103-04.

Ziolkowski points out that the popularity of the stories about penitent harlots was very much part of a Russian intellectual tradition stretching back to the early medieval period. She writes: 'Russians showed a greater enthusiasm for the less convention-bound among their own holy men and those bequeathed to them by Byzantium. In its most radical form, this predilection for idiosyncratic religiosity expressed itself in the cult of the holy fools (*iurodivye*) which in Russia reached proportions unprecedented in Byzantium.' See ibid., p. 75 (emphasis in the original).

'I vse zheny, protivliavshiesia nechestiiu raspalennomu voinov gotskich, byli biemy neshchadno zhilami tur'imi, udy zhe nezhnyia ikh opaliaemy byli povsiudu lampadami ognennymi' (65). The sexual innuendo arises in connection with Zamiatin's use
of the word *udy*, an archaic term denoting a 'part of the body' (*chast' tela*) or 'member' (*chlen*). See Sreznevskii, op. cit., vol. 3, col. 1155.

58Holofernes' tent is 'woven with purple and gold and emeralds and precious stones' (10:21), whereas Erman's tent is covered in silver and 'other precious materials': '.....vezhu bogatuiu, ukrashennuiu serebrom i inymi dobrotnami, (....)' (65). And while Holofernes tries to put Judith at her ease, telling her to 'fear not' (11:1), Erman speaks with 'delighting and tender words': '....slovami uslazhadel´ nymi i laskovymi' (66).

59For a discussion of her character, see the Anchor Bible version of *Judith*, a new translation with introduction and commentary by Carey A. Moore, New York, 1985, pp. 64-66.

60'Vidia, chto obrazom deva svetla, volosy zhe u nee, kak venets zlatyi, privratnik propustil ee v khlevinu vnutrenniuiu, gde i byl tsar´ (.....) Erman zhe tsar´, razzhennyi nezhnoi krasotoi devy (....)' (66).

61'And her words were pleasing in the sight of Holofernes and of all his servants; and they marvelled at her wisdom, and said: There is not such a woman from one end of the earth to the other, for beauty of face, and wisdom of words' (11:20-21); and later: 'And Judith came in and sat down, and Holofernes' heart was ravished with her, and his soul was moved, and he desired exceedingly her company: and he was watching for a time to deceive her, from the day that he had seen her' (12:16).

62See the Anchor Bible version of *Judith*, op. cit., p. 65.

63Ibid., p. 62.

64Ibid., p. 40.

65Ibid., p. 71.

66'Ubegaia smertnoi godiny, voiny rodimichskie skrylis´ v lesakh, okrest sushchikh (....).

   Zenitsa zhe v to vremia byla skryta v spriate tainom, izrytom v zemle' (65).

67Lampl (op. cit., p. 143) and Franz (op. cit., p. 189) both discuss the story in the context of the First World War, although they conflate the date of publication (i.e. 1917) with the actual time of writing.

69Ibid., p. 135.

70Ibid., p. 136.

71Ibid., p. 139.

72Ibid., p. 131.


74The French ambassador in St. Petersburg, Maurice Paléologue, noted that there was a 'cabal around the empress' who insisted that 'salvation can only come through a reconciliation with German kaiserism'. See Paléologue, La Russie des tsars pendant la Grande Guerre, three volumes, vol. 1, Paris, 1927, p. 235 (my translation). The historian, W. Bruce Lincoln, confirms the historical basis of this perception and notes that the popular suspicion of the Empress was groundless: 'Almost three-quarters of a century has now passed since the Great War's first winter, and not a shred of evidence has ever been found to implicate the Empress Aleksandra in any plot against her adopted homeland. That Russians high and low believed she had done so was a tragedy made all the more profound because it was partly of her own making.' See his Passage Through Armageddon: The Russians in War and Revolution, New York, Oxford, 1986, p. 97.

75Fuhrmann, op. cit., p. 110.

76Ibid., p. 138.

77Ol'ga was the first queen of a Slavic tribe to convert to Christianity, her subjects still being pagan at the time of her death. In her case, also, it is claimed that her corpse remains unaffected by physical decay: 'zdes' zhe ee vse liudi proslavliaiut, vidia, chto ona lezhit mnogo let, ne tronutaia tleniem.' See Povest' vremennykh let, op. cit., p. 53.

78See A. Trofimov, Sviatye zheny Rusi, Moscow, 1993, pp. 24-33.


80See Evgenii Zamiatin, Izbrannye proizvedeniia, op. cit., p. 528, line 6.

81See Bruce Lincoln, op. cit., p. 28.
A slightly different version is given in *The Fall of the Romanoffs*, a scandal-mongering account of the fall of the Imperial Family published anonymously in 1918. According to the author, believed to have been a well-connected aristocrat on the fringes of the court, the French doctor insinuated to the Empress under hypnosis that she would shortly conceive an infant of the male sex. A short while later the Empress felt herself to be 'enceinte' and a male heir was expected in June 1902. Nothing happened, however, and a specialist later pronounced the Empress to have been suffering from an illusion. See *The Fall of the Romanoffs*, with an introduction by Alan Wood, first published in English in 1918, reprinted edition, London, 1992, p. 13.

A military court upheld the action of the censors in April 1914, a decision which resulted in the confiscation of the journal (*Zavety*) in which the story had been due to appear. See Shane, op. cit., p. 14.

The letter in question was written from Lebedian\' after a trip to Berlin in April. He notes with distaste that the whole town is celebrating the start of the war and that the local *mal\' chiki* have rushed to join up. See Zamiatin's letters to his wife, RNB, fond 292, ed. khr. 5 [p. 19].

See *Avstraliets* (IV, 47). This was published in *Delo naroda* on 12 March 1918, not 27 May as suggested by G. Leech-Anspach (op. cit., p. 95, footnote 178).

Die altrussische Stilisierung übernimmt hier eine zusätzliche Funktion: durch die implizierte Erinnerung an die nationale Vergangenheit appelliert sie assoziativ an das patriotische Gewissen des russischen Lesers. Wie viele andere prominente russische Autoren stellt Remizov 1914 sein literarisches Schaffen
in den Dienst der zaristischen Kriegspsychologie (...)." See Lampl, op. cit., p. 140.
88Ibid., p. 143.
89See Ogni sviatogo Dominika (II, 243-81).
90See Tserkov' bozhii (III, 94-95). For the Biblical symbolism of My, see R. A. Gregg, 'Two Adams and Eve in the Crystal Palace: Dostoevsky, the Bible, and "We"', Slavic Review, 24, 1965, pp. 680-87.
91See 'Vozvrashchenie Evgeniiia Zamiatina', op. cit., p. 54.
92Tulumbas is reprinted in Neimanis (III, 72-74).
93The epistle (poslanie) was a document which sought to persuade its addressees of the benefits of Christianity. It was the form preferred by the so-called Christian apologists (130-200 A.D.), who sought to defend the faith from both internal and external intellectual attack before it had become officially accepted by the Roman authorities. See Michael W. Holmes (ed.), The Apostolic Fathers, Leicester, 1989.
94Arianism, a cult which denied the true Godhead of Jesus Christ, was a widespread and damaging heresy named after the Alexandrian priest Arius (died around 336 A.D.). Zamiatin's reference to Arius comes half-way through Tulumbas: '(....) bude nevezhestvennyi chuzhezemets ili mirianin nechestivyi v shapke stoit, to inoki, revnuia o vere, zaushaiut nechestivtsa, kak nekogda Ariia zloumnogo.

(.....) I ne luchshe li odnomu zapechatat' usta, nezheli tysiachu pogubit', poseiav v dushi ikh suetnoe mudrovanie i somnenie ereticheskoe?' (III, 73).
95For further information on this 'order', first established by Remizov in 1908, see Shane, op. cit., p. 178, and Buznik's footnote in 'Pis' ma E. I. Zamiatina A. M. Remizovu', op. cit., p. 179.
96Zamiatin's piece had been prompted by an earlier story of Remizov's, also entitled Tulumbas, which appeared in the first issue of Zapiski mechtatelei for 1919. See M. Chudakova, 'Eretik, ili matros na machte', in Evgenii Zamiatin, Sochineniia, Moscow, 1988, pp. 498-523 [p. 502].
97There are two draft versions of this story: 1) O blazhennom startse Pamve Nereste....., dated August 1920; and 2) O tom, kak...
istselen byl inok Erazm (O blazhennom startse Pamve Nereste...),
which is four foolscap pages longer in length and apparently the
version published by the Petropolis publishing house. See IMLI,
fond 47, opis’ 1, ed. khr. 70 & 71. Unless otherwise stated, I will
be referring to the Neimanis version (I, 463-74).
97Evg. Zamiatin. O tom, kak istselen byl otrok Erazm , with
illustrations by Boris Kustodiey, first printed in Berlin, 1922,
98The lubok versions tended to focus on the more popular
saints, such as the early Christian martyr, George, Nicholas of
Myra, Aleksis 'Man of God', and the Holy Fool, Vasilii. See
Ziolkowski, op. cit., pp. 22-23.
99'Apocryphon' in Greek properly refers to a 'hidden writing'
kept secret from all but the initiate and considered too exalted
for the general public.
100'Kak izvestno iz vsekh Chetii-Minei, vsiakomu nastoiashchemu
zatvorniku i podvizhniku po vremenam iavlilis’ besy i
soblazniali ego.' See 'Vstrechi s B. M. Kustodieyym' (IV, 169).
102'Skazannya inok Erazm eshche vo chreve materi posviashchen
byl Bogu. Roditeli ego dolgie gody revnostno, no tshchetno liubili
drug druga, i nakonets, istoshchiv vse suetnye chelovecheskie
sredstva, prishli v obitel’ k blazhennomu Pamve' (463).
103See 'Zhittie sviatykh i pravednykh bogotets loakima i Anny',
op. cit., p. 187.
104For the stock theme of barren women praying for divine aid
in conceiving and then consecrating their infants to the service of
God, see Ziolkowski, op. cit., pp. 165-66.
105'Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put
my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into his
side, I will not believe'. See the Gospel according to St. John,
chapter 20, verse 25.
106I am relying on the English version of Sophronius' Life of St.
Mary of Egypt in Benedicta Ward, Harlots of the Desert , Oxford,
1987, pp. 35-56. This account, originally composed in Greek and
translated into Latin by Paul, Deacon of Naples, is the version
published by Dmitrii of Rostov in his Reading Menaea , generally
considered to be the most widely read in the nineteenth century. See Ziolkowski, op. cit., p. 74 (footnote 4). This is the version used by Remizov in his *Mariia Egipetskaia*, published for the first time in the 1907 'Ory' edition of *Limonar* (see footnote eight of the present chapter). It is probably worth noting that Zamiatin quotes extensively from this edition of *Limonar* in his lectures at the House of Arts (in particular, he quotes from the short story entitled *O bezumii Irodadiinom*). See Zamiatin, 'O ritme v proze', in 'Tekhniika khudozhestvennoi prozy', op. cit., pp. 94-96 [pp. 95 & 96]. It is also worth recalling that various 'tsvetniki' are mentioned in the 1913 short story *Neputevyi* (I, 101), and again in *Inok Erazm* itself (465).

Throughout the middle ages, both official ecclesiastical and folk accounts of the Lives of Alexis and Mary won a large audience among the Slavs, as well as among their Western European contemporaries. In Russia this popularity persisted into the nineteenth century (...'). See Ziolkowski, op. cit., p. 73. She discusses the adaptations of her legend which appear in the work of Boris Almazov, Elisaveta Shakhova, Fedor Dostoevskii and Aleksei Remizov (ibid., pp. 73-83). Remizov reworked the story twice in the early part of his career. The first adaptation was entitled *Mariia Egipetskaia* ('O mesiatse i zvezdakh i otkuda oni takie'), first published in St. Petersburg in 1907, reprinted in volume seven of his Works - see Remizov, *Otrechennye povesti*, reprinted edition, op. cit., pp. 43-47. The second shared the same title, *Mariia Egipetskaia*, but was written in 1915 and first published in his *Trava-Murava. Skaz i velichanie*, Berlin, 1922, pp. 39-45.


See Boris Thompson, 'Blok and Belyi: divergent readings of the poetry of Vladimir Solov'ev', in A. McMillin (ed.) *Symbolism*

111 See A. S. Pushkin. Gavriiliada. Polnyi tekst, introduction by Valerii Briusov, Moscow, 1918. This was the first uncensored edition of the poem to be published in Russia - see M. Alekseev, 'Zametki o Gavriliiade', in his Pushkin, Leningrad, 1962, pp. 281-325 [pp. 283-84].

112 'Zadacha dlia khudozhnika zdes` byla ochen` trudnaia. Rech` shla, konechno, ne o primitivnoi, otkrovennoi erotike, vrode izvestnykh rabot Somova: nuzhno bylo v illiustratsiiakh dat` to, chto tekst davalo tol`ko mezhdu strok, tol`ko v namekah, v obrazakh.' See 'Vstrechi s B. M. Kustodievyom' (IV, 169).

113 '(....) nekii smradnyi, gustoi i belyi, kak moloko, dozhd` ' (466).


115 For a discussion of the significance of this quotation within the Leskov story as a whole, see ibid.

116 According to legend, St. Erasmus, or Elmo, was a martyr-saint who died when his intestines were wound on to a windlass. He became the patron saint of sailors, and the term 'St. Elmo's fire' was given to the electrical discharges emitted by masts in the vicinity of lightning. See The Penguin Dictionary of Saints, op. cit., p. 116.


118 Kratkaia istoriia "Vsermirnoi Literatury" ot osnovaniia i do sego dnia (III, 328-52).

119 The foreward to Zhitie Blokhi states that the text is intended only for a 'small group of friends' (II, 507). Kratkaia istoriia, according to B. Troitskii, the scholar responsible for the commentary in the Neimanis edition, was also written for 'internal use': 'Zamiatinskaia ISTORIIA pisalas` dlia "vnutrennego
pol’zovaniia", dlia "posviashchennykh"....' (III, 333). Compare this with Innocent's words at the end of Inok Erazm: 'I lish’ ia, (.....) zapisal vse k nazidaniiu i rukovodstvu igumenov nashei obiteli' (I, 474).

120 Gor’kii claimed in a letter to Lunarcharskii that the publishing house 'was the sole source of subsistence for the vast majority of its employees.' Cited in Troitskii's introduction to Kratkaia istoriia (III, 329).

121 See Shane, op. cit., p. 26

122 'Nedavno v stat’e o novykh russkikh romanakh (v "Marianne"), upominaia o Gor’kom, ia nazval ego "Le pape de la Litterature sovietique". Kur’eznaia opechatka tipografii sdelala iz "pape" - "pope". Po strannoi sluchainosti eta opechatka pochti povtorila to, chto Gor’kii v shutku govoril o sebe: on nazyval sebia: "literaturnym protopopom".

'Ja dumaiu, etoi shutkoi Gor’kii pravil’nee vsego opredelil svoe polozhenie v sovetskoj literature. Bylo, konechno, nemalo i takikh avtorov, kotorye iavlialis’ k Gor’komu, chtoby "potselovat’ paskuiu tufliu". S takimi blagochestvymi palomnikami Gor’kii skuchal i toropilsia vyprovodit’. 'See 'M. Gor’kii' (IV, 191).

123 'Tak v pervyi god pravleniia Avgusta Maksima protsvetala zemlja Vsemirnoi Literatury, dobrodetel’ i liubov’ k otechestvu byla velika, polia i zheny ravno plodorodny.' See Kratkaia istoriia (III, 334).

124 When Pamva addresses Erasmus' mother after he has cured her of infertility, he says: 'Otnyne muzh tvoi uzhe ne budet podoben pakhariu, vozdeyvaushchemu pesok, i trud ego prineset plody' (463). It is worth noting that the word 'fruit' is used allegorically in Kratkaia istoriia to refer to books: 'Iz okrestnykh pustyn’ ezhegodno pritekali m nochnye karavany perevodchikov i, raskinuv pestrye shatry, torgovali plodami svoikh zemel’ (....)' (III, 334).

125 'Kogda iz slushatelei etogo universiteta vyshlo neskol’ko talantlivykh pisatelei, Gor’kii chuvstvoval sebia, kak schastlivyi otets, on vozilsia s nimi, kak nasedka s tsypliatami. Ochen’ trogatel’ nye otnosheniia s nimi sokhranilis’ u Gor’kogo i pozhe, kogda "tsypliata" vyrosli i stali chut’ chto ne klassikami novoi
sovetskoi prozy.' See 'M. Gor`kii' (IV, 192). A similar metaphor is used in connection with Pamva's solicitous protection of the novice Erasmus: 'Byl on gneven, i sedye brovi ego byli rasprosterty, podobno voskryliiu, i ves` on byl, kak groznaia, letiashchaia na zashchitu pengtsov svoikh ptitsa' (469).

126`Kak izvestno iz vsekh Chetii-Minei, vsiakomu nastoiashchemu zatvorniku i podvizhniku po vremenam iavlialis` besy i soblazniali ego. Na moiu doliu vypalo stat` takim besom dla Borisa Mikhailovicha - i posledstviem soblazna byla edinstvennaia poavivshaiasia y pechati seriia eroticheskikh risunkov Kustodieva - illiustratsi\[k moemu rasskazu "O tom, kak istselel byl otrok Erazm".' See 'Vstrechi s B. M. Kustodievym' (IV, 169).

127See Shane, op. cit., pp. 36-37.

128In this preface, he wrote: 'Russkaia literatura zhivet, zhivet i, razvivaias`, sovershenstvuetsia. Eto ` radost`.' Cited in Primochkina, 'M. Gor`kii i E. Zamiatin', op. cit., p. 154.

129`Fedin, povtoriaiu, stoit kak-to osobniakom vo vsei gruppe. Bol`shaia chast` ego tovarishchei idet pod flagom neorealizma, a on vse eshche tselikom zastrial v Gor`kom.' See 'Serapionovy brat`ia' (IV, 535).

130`Chrezvychaino liubopytno, chto vsia eta gruppa pisatelei v literaturnom otnoshenii byla "levee" Gor`kogo, ona iskala novoi formy - i iskala ee nikak ne v realizme Gor`kogo. Tem pokazatel` nee ikh otnoshenie k Gor`komu: eto byla liubov` imeno k cheloveku.' See 'M. Gor`kii' (IV, 192).

131`Vidim ogromnuiu oshibku kazhdogo, kto obiazatel`no prikleivaet k nam zamiatinskii iarlychok. My ne oboroniaemsia, a napominaem, chto Zamiatin svoei stat`ei o serapionakh....sozdal iz sebia metra. Eto neverno po sushchestvu i neverno formal`no(...). Ne bud` Zamiatina, mog by byt` Shklovskii, ne bud` Shklovskogo, mog by byt` Shishkov ili Chapygin, esli by oni tekhnicheski byli blizki k urovniu Zamiatina. No klassicheskie obraztsy, kotorymi my pitalis`, ne ot Zamiatina, uchilis` - ne na zamiatinskoj proze, a na klassikakh i svoei - uchenicheskoi, kogda chitali svoi rasskazy. Vot!' See Nikitin's letter to A. Voronskii dated 29 December 1922, expressing his own opinion and that of Zoshchenko, cited in
Primochkina, op. cit., p. 155. It should be noted that this letter was written only three months after Zamiatin had been arrested by security police and nearly sent into exile.

Nikitin's reaction at the beginning of the new term was symptomatic: '(.....) neterpelivo dozhidaius` nachala zaniatii s Vami. Ia chuvstvuiu tu ogromneishuiu pol`zu, kotoruiu oni mne prinosiat - i ne znaiu, chem smogu Vas za eto otblagodarit`. Iz slepogo Vy menia sdelal zriachim. Bukval`no!' See Nikitin's letter to Zamiatin dated 30 September 1920, kept in the Zamiatin archive in IMLI, fond 47, opis` 3, ed. khr. 148.

"la khotel by, chtob vsekh vas uiazvila zavist` k "prezhit`m" - Sergeevu-Tsenskomu, M. Prishvinu, Zamiatinu, liudiam, kotorye stanoviatse vse bogache slovom - ia imeiu v vidu "Preobrazhenienie" Tsenskogo i "Kashcheevu tsesp`" M. Prishvina, i Zamiatina - ego stat`iu v "Russkom iskusstve", stat`iu, v kotoroi on skazal o vas mnogo vernogo.' See Gor`kii's letter to V. Kaverin dated 13 December 1923, cited in 'Gor`kii i sovetskie pisateli. Neizdannaia perepiska', in Literaturnoe nasledstvo, volume 70, Moscow, 1963, p. 178.

133The remark featured as part of a general assessment of his recent fiction: 'Zamiatin napisal koketlivo, vychurno i kholodno. On - konechno! - ochen` umnyi chelovek, i liubit pokazat` eto, no slishkom upriamno i postoianno nestaivaia na etom, on uzhe ne vozbuzychdaet izumlenia pred ego umom. Dostatochno izumlialis`.
V 4-i knige predpolagaetsia perepechatat` izdannyi im monasheskii anekdot "O startse", i t.d. la ochen` somnevaius` v literaturnoi i esteticheskoj tsennosti etoi gruboii shutki, v kotoroi ne vizhu nichego, krome ves` ma neudachnoi popytki ob` `edinit` A. Fransa s A. Remizovym.' See Gor`kii's letter to Tikhonov dated 23 October 1924, cited in Primochkina, op. cit., p. 151.
134Cited in ibid., pp. 151-52.
135See 'Novaia russkaia proza' (IV, 259).
136The word nereet refers to the process by which female fish 'spawn' eggs which are then subsequently fertilized by the sperm of the male of the species. See Slovar` russkogo iazyka, op. cit., vol. 2, 1983, p. 476.
See the draft versions deposited in IMLI, fond 47, opis' 1, ed. khr. 85 & 86. The story was first published in *Novaia Rossiia*, 1, January 1926, pp. 57-62, and later in the 1927 collection, *Nechestivye rasskazy*. All subsequent references, unless otherwise stated, are to the Neimanis version (I, 475-81).

Shane, op. cit., p. 178.

"Poverit' v to, chto chudo bylo kogda-to, s kem-to - ia by eshche mog, i vy mogli by; no chto eto - teper', vchera, s vami - vot imenno s vami - podumaite tol'ko!" (475). Compare this with Sophronius' assertion at the beginning of his *Life* of St. Mary: 'No one should have any doubts about believing me, for I am writing about what I have heard, and no one should think in astonishment over the magnitude of the miracles that I am inventing fables. God deliver me from falsifying an account in which his name comes (....). If, however, such readers of this narrative are found, who are so overcome by the miraculous nature of this account that they will not want to believe it, may the Lord be merciful to them! For they consider the infirmity of human nature and think that miracles related about people are impossible.' Cited in Ward, op. cit., p. 36.

The time zones described in the story (more than one hour in advance of Rome, two hours ahead of Britain and six hours ahead of New York [476]) suggest that the monastery is somewhere in Central Europe. The woman who dies in the hospital has three sons called Stas, Janek, and Franz, which means that she could be either from Germany, or any German-speaking part of Poland or Czechoslovakia. However, the formal mode of address she uses in relation to the doctor - *pan* - is known only in Polish: '.....Khorosho eshche, u pana doktora milostivoe serdtse, ne beret s menia deneg' (478); moreover, the doctor's name, Wojciech, is also Polish.

"Za leto i osen' napisal dva rasskaza (.....). Drugoi - malen'kii, no neprilichnyi, vrode "Erazma" (pisano letom, a v zharu - kak Vam izvestno - bludnyi bes silen).' See Zamiatin's letter to Lunts dated 12 November 1923, cited in 'L. Lunts i Serapionovy brat'ia', *Novyi zhurnal*, 82, 1966, pp. 184-86 [p. 185].
After hearing Zamiatin read the story out aloud at a special evening organized by the editors of *Russkii sovremennik*; an evening attended by Anna Akhmatova, Kornei Chukovskyi, Boris Pil'niak and Abram Efros, an anonymous correspondent for the Berlin emigre newspaper, *Dni*, offered the following assessment: 'Khorosh iazyk, i glupovataia figura kanonika nedurna; no v obshchem kakoi-to vzodor, chepukha narochitaia.' Cited in Chudakova, op. cit., p. 504.

Chudakova's response is symptomatic: 'Pozhalui, samogo Zamiatina takaia otsenka vpolne by udovletvorila - chem bolee ser'eznoi stanovilas' okruzhevushchaia Uteratura, chem bolee ideologizirovalsia obshchestvennyi byt, tem bolee on chuvstvoval sebia, vidimo, skomorokhom, tem znachimei stanovilos' dlia nego samogo vsevozmozhnoe shutovstvo.' See ibid.

The quotation in question comes in the first chapter entitled 'Treats of Simplicissimus's Rustic Descent and of his Upbringing Answering Thereto': 'But as to knowledge of things divine, none shall ever persuade me that any lad of my age in all Christendom could there beat me, for I knew nought of God or man, of Heaven or hell, of angel or devil, nor could discern between good and evil. So may it be easily understood that I, with such knowledge of theology, lived like our first parents in Paradise, which in their innocence knew nought of sickness or death or dying, and still less of the Resurrection (....) Yes, I was so perfected in ignorance that I knew not that I knew nothing.' See Johann Jacob Grimmelshausen, *Simplicissimus*, translated by S. Goodrich, Sawtry, Cambridgeshire, 1989, p. 3.


-Telo: V spal'niakh u zhenschini takie byvaiut kresla, obitye rozovym shelkom, s teplymi iamochkami, skladochkami, zhivy'e - mozhet byt', inogda dazhe zameniaiushchie svoikh khoziiaek' (477).
See the Life of St. Margaret in The Golden Legend, op. cit., pp. 613-14.

For a more detailed discussion of this story, see Ziolkowski, op. cit., pp 84-89.

N-nu, a kak vash...

Kanonik Simplitsii znal - o chem dal´she, sekundu on byl dich´iu na vertelev nad medlennym ognem - doktor medlennno zakurival papirosu' (475).

Kanonik Simplitsii raskleil veki: nad nim - rozhki, prishchurennye kojQi glaza, no vse zhe etot demon - nesomennno, doktor Voichek (....)' (479).

The confusion which the Devil causes traditionally is hinted at obliquely by Zamiatin in his description of Dr. Wojciech's waiting room: 'Komnata - tikhaiia, s zhutko-belymi stenami, dveriami, skam´iami kak budto uzhe ne zdes´, na zemle, gde vse pestro, shumno, gde vsegda pereputano chernoe i beloe' (my emphasis [478]).


His position at this time has been described as in a state of permanent flux. See Galushkin's commentary in 'E. I. Zamiatin. Pis´mo k Voronskomu', op. cit., p. 18.

Dorogoi moi, esli vas smushtaet mysl´ o budushchey zhizni, o vozmezdii i o prochem - chto poniatno - to ia mogu vas uspokoi´: eto budet vo vsikom sluchae ne skoro. Est´ verneishii sposob prodlit´ zhizn´ do liubogo sroka' (476).

Etot den´, po vole sud´by, byl tozhe v fevrale, kak i ta samaia Pepel´naia Sreda (.....). Vprochem, vse eto smutno, izdali, skvoz´son: mladenets uzhe zasypal' (481).

These two appearances are linked imagistically: when Simplicius starts to black out, he sees 'gossamers' or 'spiders-webs' in front of his eyes: 'organ - gde-to za tysiacu verst, v glazakh - pautina' (477). Likewise, when he is wheeled into Dr. Wojciech's surgery, the woman lying next to him on a stretcher with her swollen belly is described as a spider, or pauk (478).

... ugoshchal (....) rozovoi, kak mladenets, rimskoi langustoi' (476).
This is mentioned twice: 'V ostal'nom kanonik byl zdorov, emu govorili dazhe, chto on polneet'; and: 'Da ia kak-to.... Mne govorili, chto ia dazhe popolnel. A chto?' (477).

This is mentioned specifically by the author-narrator: 'I vot - sreda, ta samaia Pepe'naia Sreda, postom na pervoi nedele, kogda vse eto proizoshlo' (478).

No dlaia kanonika Simplitsiia - eto bylo tol'ko nachalo; kontsom eto bylo dlaia toia pauch'ei zhenschiny: (...)' (479).


Ibid., pp. 280-81.

Ibid., p. 280.

Ibid., pp. 276-77.

Counting and numbers in the text are associated explicitly with Dr Wojciech: 'Tsifry: chto zhe tut skazhesh'. (. ....) Kazhdyi vecher, ukhodia, doktor Voichek ostavlial v golove u kanonika takoi vot gvozd', kanonik vorochalsia v posteli, dumal, dumal (. ....)' (476). Later in the story, moreover, the doctor counts to three as Simplicius loses consciousness: '- Schitaite vsluhk: raz-dva-tri... Nu? Slyshite?' (479).

Zamiatin's description of this scene is illustrative: '... Kanonik Simplitsii vynul koshelek, vysypal vse, chto tam bylo, i otdal zhenschchine. I v tot samyi moment, kogda ona zasovyvala vse eto v svoi ogromnyi, tugoi zhivot - voshel doktor Voichek, prishchurilsia, popolz na kanonika, pugaia ulybkoi.

- Chto, zapasaetes' v dorogu dobrymi delami? Schitaete grekhi?' (479).

- Vot, rozhaiu tretii raz - i kazhdyi raz rezhut...' (478). For rozhat', the modern dictionary definition includes the following: 'Prinesti plody, dat' (davat') urozhai (o pochve, rastenii). For rezat' in connection with the harvest, the dictionary refers to Tolstoi's Anna Karenina: 'V samyi zhar kos'ba pokazalas' emu [Levinu] ne tak trudna. ---Kosa rezala sama soboi.' See the respective entries in Slovar' russkogo iazyka, vol. 3, 1983, op. cit., p. 724, and ibid., p. 698.

In the final chapter of the Gospel according to St. John, Jesus appears to Simon Peter and several other apostles by the Sea of
Tiberias and encourages them to break their fast. After miraculously producing bread and fish, Jesus turns to Peter and makes him promise to 'Feed my lambs' and 'Feed my sheep'. See the Gospel according to St John, chapter 21, verses 15-19.
CHAPTER SIX

Blokha and Popular Theatre

The conceit of the writer as 'itinerant player' and 'minstrel-buffoon' (*skomorokh*), a public performer whose bawdy and subversive sense of humour provides uproarious entertainment for the public at the expense of repressive and puritanical authority, is already implicit in the playful impiety of the hagiographical parodies. This deliberate lampooning of the colourless classics of ecclesiastical writing has more than a whiff of the anarchic, obscene and 'devilish' antics for which the wandering minstrels were justly famous; furthermore, as we have seen, satirical clowning of this impious nature was a double-edged sword which could be aimed both at the well-worn articles of the Christian faith and the humorless dogmas of Soviet ideology. It was an expression of anti-authoritarian defiance and cheeky rebelliousness, as well as an indication of the forms which art would take among certain writers in the twenties - mocking, anecdotal, and challenging official orthodoxies simply by virtue of their seeming lack of seriousness.

The conceit of the modern *skomorokh* was actually instigated by Aleksei Remizov with *Tulumbas* (1919), his ironic and stylized reflection on the 'disaster' which had struck Russia in the form of the October Revolution. The title referred to the Turkish drum banged with a stick by itinerant players as they went about their daily business, an effective metaphor for the subversive
obligations of the modern satirist, whose job was to continue to expose mendacity and hypocrisy wherever and whenever it might occur - as Remizov loftily declared: (....) lozh´ vsegda budet lozh´iu, a litsemerie vsegda budet litsemeriem, kak by oni ni nazyvalis´. Zamiatin, unsurprisingly, as a fellow miscreant in the 'Great and Free Order of Apes', was quick to follow his master's lead. His own version of Tulumbas, a proclamation to the nation issued in the name of Zamutii, a fake pseudonym which signalled his mischievous role as 'obfuscator' and 'sower of discord', appeared in the same journal the following year; moreover, the idea that the author's role in the modern era was to mimic the antics of the skomorokhi became a crucial element in the conception and staging of Blokha, which was premiered in Moscow in February 1925. Originally, Zamiatin envisaged the play as a 'minstrel-buffoon's game' (skomorosh´ia igra) and in a pre-production exchange with the director, A. Dikii, he signed himself 'Your merryman' (Vash khaldei), recognition of the fact that, like the masked entertainers who introduce the play to the audience on stage, he was, as author, the clown and jester who improvised the whole spectacle from behind the scenes.

Chudakova has argued that as the literature of the 1920s became ever more ideologically self-righteous and conformist, so Zamiatin's fiction erred increasingly towards the anecdotal, the flippant and the absurd. Yet such flippancy often concealed unpalatable messages and truths which the authorities proved unwilling to tolerate in the long term. A few years later Zamiatin was denounced for his refusal to submit to any ideological straitjacket and forced into exile, much as the skomorokhi of antiquity were accused by the Church of links with 'unclean

352
forces' and banned from performing in public. His choice of the word 'heretic' as an expression of his artistic and philosophical position had finally come home to roost, albeit in its rural, sinister and 'unclean' sense.

Only six months separate the completion of the last hagiographic parody, *Pepel´naa Sreda*, and the beginning of preparatory work on Zamiatin's adaptation of Leskov's celebrated satire, *Skaz o tul´skom kosom Levshe i o stal´noi blokhe* (1881). As a writer and critic, Zamiatin had often expressed an interest in street entertainment. In his review of the two *Sirin* volumes, written in 1914, he had evoked the dismal picture of a 'whining' organ-grinder and his 'urchin-contortionist' companion in order to convey the narrative awkwardness of Belyi's novel, *Peterburg*; this marked the beginning of an extended metaphor which incorporated two of the fairground's most popular attractions - the peep-show (*raek*) and 'smoke-filled' showbooth (*chadnyi balagan*). In his fictional work the portrayal of this kind of entertainment tends to revolve around impressionistic depictions of Orthodox feast-days in the countryside. *Kuny* incorporates a detailed description of a round-dance game played on St. Elijah's Day (July 20). Elsewhere, there are descriptions of spring and summertime celebrations (*gulian´ia*), fairs (*iarmarki*) and goods hawked at colourful stalls during carnivals and church fêtes, such as poppy-seed cakes (*makovniki*), biscuits baked in the shape of animal figurines (*kozuli*), treacle-cakes (*prianiki*), carved toys (*bklushi*), small boxes made out of birchwood (*berestianye korobki*), and clay whistles (*svistulki*), all of them integral to the
commercial fairground experience in the nineteenth and
 twentieth century. In Ostrovitiane, the satirical story based on
Zamiatin's visit to Great Britain, a key scene is located at a
boxing-match in which the main protagonist actually takes part.

In Rus' (1923), a short story inspired by the popular paintings of
Boris Kustodiev, Zamiatin includes an impressionistic picture of an
urban fair during Epiphany, replete with balagan, stalls, colourful
balloons and carousels with music. He also refers briefly to the
famous Nizhnii Novgorod fairs of the last century in his 1936
obituary of Maksim Gor'kii.

While undoubtedly testifying to a general interest in the world of
street culture, these details belong essentially to Zamiatin's
kolorit. In contrast, not only does Blokha exploit the visual and
verbal material of 'low-life' culture - such as lubok engravings,
theatre posters, the puppet-theatre, the peep-show and the
itinerant tradition of clowns, jesters, mummers, dancing bears
and 'merrymen' - it also seeks to incorporate some of the formal
devices of popular theatre as well: the stylization (uslovnost') of
the showbooth tradition, the mask-changing and improvisation of
the Italian commedia dell'arte, the doggerel of the peep-show
operator and balagannyi ded, and the absurd farce of pantomime
and vaudeville. Combined with the bright and colourful stage
designs produced by Boris Kustodiev, these devices lend the play
a strongly lubok flavour; according to his friend and colleague,
Iurii Annenkov, it was Zamiatin himself who initially defined the
play as an experiment in 'dramatized skaz', an experiment which
he, Annenkov, argued went far beyond the 'half-way house'
approach of such writers as Remizov. Hitherto, this has been
acknowledged by all scholars who have written about the play: Vinogradov, Keenan and Goldt at different times have all drawn attention to the skaz-like impact of the play's stylization, while Douglas Clayton has gone so far as to claim that the 'effect achieved by Zamiatin in this play (as in some of his early prose) is much more complete and convincing than that of Leskov.'

What is missing, however, is a sense of the play as a literary text and allegorical satire on modern times. It would seem that Zamiatin's love affair with the formal devices of popular theatre, expressed so vividly in his letters to Dikii, has distracted attention away from the serious, thematic content. It is this neglected aspect of the play, along with a detailed examination of the popular Russian sources consulted by Zamiatin, as well as the circumstances surrounding its actual stage production and reception, which constitutes the central focus of this chapter.

It is not quite clear when exactly Zamiatin first accepted the offer to adapt Leskov's Levsha for the stage - it is known only that he did so after Aleksei Tolstoi had refused, claiming ignorance of the peep-show and the traditions of street theatre. The (Neimanis) editors' notes to Zhitie Blokhi suggest Spring 1924, after a visit to Leningrad by Dikii himself. The Zamiatin-Dikii-Kustodiev correspondence presupposes a date of 18 January 1924 at the very latest. While a letter from Zamiatin to his wife suggests the idea may have been mooted informally as early as 9 September 1923. Zamiatin claimed later in 'Zakulisy' that the play took four months to gestate and only five weeks to write, a time-span which appears to be confirmed by the earlier letters to Dikii; nonetheless, the process of conception and execution was
far from smooth or even straightforward. After an initial exchange of views about basic principles which spanned three letters dating from 10 February to 'before' 1 March 1924, there was a gap of approximately two months, at the end of which Dikii called desperately for a version of the play, 'even if only in draft form.' This suggests that the play had not been completed, even in rough form, more than two months after the original deadline set by Kliucharev. The actual work on the rehearsals did not commence until October, yet in the same month Dikii asks for the fourth act to be seriously revised because 'it is unacceptable in its present form' and requires the reintroduction of the 'merrymen'. This problem is quickly resolved at the end of the October after a positive response from Zamiatin. However, additional insertions are still being supplied as late as December: these include the opening speech of the main khaldei, the doggerel of the peep-show operator at the beginning of Act Two, the proposal to 'double-up' the first merryman both as the Dutch Doctor-Apothecary and the English Chemist-Mechanic in the final act, and the decision to have the play end on a high 'love-note' (Levsha and Masha, the hero and heroine, leaving the stage arm-in-arm). Despite a last-minute flurry of activity concerning the posters, programmes, and the kind of cape to be presented by the Tsar to Levsha in Act Four, the play finally opened at the Second Studio of Moscow's Art Theatre on 11 February 1925.

Although the dispute between Zamiatin and Dikii in their early letters is important, and has attracted scholarly interest, it should be pointed out that their differences of opinion have been slightly exaggerated. It is commonly held, for instance, that Zamiatin's
original plan differed fundamentally from Dikii's; and that while the former stuck tenaciously to his guns, invoking in his defence the legendary dispute between the Italian playwrights Carlo Gozzi and Carlo Goldoni, the latter bowed submissively to his will without resistance.\(^\text{32}\) Strictly speaking, the correspondence does not support such an argument. Leaving aside the decision to rearrange the material purely for dramatic purposes, on which they were both in agreement, the basic dispute between the two artists arose out of the relative importance they attached to the 'form' of the play, as opposed to its 'content'. As expressed in the early letters, Zamiatin was plainly more interested in Leskov's tale from the formal point of view as an illustration of the Russian 'fairy-tale' (skazka) - hence his remarks regarding Gozzi; while Dikii was evidently more preoccupied with its content, i.e. as a tragi-comic tale about 'the fate of the Russian genius.'\(^\text{33}\) This led to initial disagreement about the specific approach which should be adopted from the dramatic point of view. Zamiatin insisted that the fairy-tale stylization of the play demanded that the play end on a positive note - he considered the conclusion of Levsha to be the 'least convincing' part of the story\(^\text{34}\) - while Dikii wanted to end the play on a minor note to reflect more faithfully the register of the original.\(^\text{35}\) By the same token, while Dikii envisaged an adaptation with something of a contemporary, satirical flavour, Zamiatin initially insisted on a more abstract, formulaic, 'mythical' approach.

What seems to happen during the course of their correspondence is that some sort of satisfactory compromise is cobbled together. After Dikii's second letter of 'before' 1 March 1924, in which he
confesses himself 'appalled' by the overly formal and optimistic emphasis of Zamiatin's original concept, there is a conspicuous silence lasting two months, a silence partly excused by Zamiatin's involvement in the launching of Russkii sovremennik, but one which by no means explains his total lack of response to the issues which Dikii had raised previously. This period is probably the time during which vital artistic decisions were taken. Later in the correspondence, on 30 October, we learn that Zamiatin has deliberately left out the merrymen from the fourth scene in order to tone down the 'playfulness' and 'fun' of the production, permitting the underlying 'seriousness' of the themes to peep through. This is proof, surely, that he accepted some of Dikii's reservations and was trying to correct the imbalance - as he himself noted ruefully in the same letter: 'No u menia eto vse teorii, a u Vas - praktika, i na teatre Vy, gliadish', okazhetes' pravy.' Furthermore, the conclusion of the play underwent several alterations, from an unambiguously 'happy ending' in the first draft (Levsha is handsomely rewarded for his inventiveness and can now afford to marry Masha) to the rather more ambiguous death-and-resurrection scene in the final version (Levsha is killed by Tsarist police, but is miraculously resurrected by a magical stove). This is the strongest evidence so far that Zamiatin had relented considerably as far as his initial, preferred option was concerned.

Although Zamiatin and Dikii agreed from the outset that the play should be a new artistic product which could depart from Leskov if dramatically required, it is obvious that Dikii had doubts about Zamiatin's inclusion of the merrymen as a metatheatrical device.
Both seemed to agree that the play should take a non-realistic form. Dikii, in fact, insisted in his first letter that he was quite happy with this: 'Glavnoe v "p’ese" - skaz, bylina, legenda, mif'.

In his second letter, he writes enthusiastically: 'Skazka - da! Eto pri vsekh variantakh. Eto pri vsekh vozmozhnostakh ostaetsia. Eto forma. Eto obiazatel’no. Eto i interesno, i nuzhno, i vygodno.'

What bothered Dikii was the way in which the 'fun and games' would automatically affect the tone of the production and compromise his tragic ambitions. Stressing that the fairy-tale elements should affect only the 'form' of the play, rather than its 'content', he failed to grasp, as Zamiatin obviously did, that the two were inextricably linked and could not be easily disassociated. It is noteworthy, however, that little flesh had been given to the concept of the merrymen during these initial explorations. The outlines given in Zamiatin's letters of 3 February (to Kliucharev) and 22 February (to Dikii) contain detailed outlines of scenic considerations, but the mention of merrymen is indicated only in the first act (they perform a 'playlet' on the subject of the 'Dog-King and his son Peregud'); indeed, there is little hint of the practical form these supposed metatheatrical devices will take, and it is worth remembering that only the first act and the beginning of the second had been completed by the end of February. It is interesting, nonetheless, to compare Zamiatin's projections at this stage with the actual production. In the first letter he states his conviction that only the relativistic style of popular comedy and balagan can properly convey the 'fairy-tale' flavour of Leskov's text: the play should therefore essentially be a 'game played by itinerant fools' (skomorosh’iaigra ), the devices of which would be periodically
'laid bare' during the course of the spectacle; and the Tsar should be modelled, not on the historical figure of Nicholas I, but on fairy-tale prototypes, such as Tsar Saltan and Tsar Dodon. In his second letter to Dikii, he outlined his proposals for an authentic, Russian production in the style of the peasant sculptor Sergei Konenk, which he assured Dikii would influence only the form, not the content, of the adaptation. The three merrymen, modelled on the familiar commedia dell'arte figures of Pantalone, Tartaglia and Brighella, would appear almost by accident in the first act, but remain an organic part of the play from that moment onwards. They would wear masks and assume the roles of several characters, at various points changing their costumes in full view of the audience. In order to forestall Dikii's anxieties, Zamiatin claimed that these devices were simply a logical and natural extension of the dramatic experiments he had observed in Smyshliaev's production of Shakespeare's The Taming of the Shrew at the First Studio of the Moscow Art Theatre in 1923.

At some point during this correspondence, possibly between the end of February and the beginning of May, Zamiatin undertook some rigorous research into the history of popular drama, research which was reflected in his essay 'Narodnyi teatr' and his illuminating remarks in 'Zakulisy'. According to the latter, the final script was the product of a four-month gestation period during which Zamiatin saturated himself with materials relating to the historical era he wished to evoke - he mentions traditional folk comedies and folk-tales (skazki), the Italian plays of Gozzi and Goldoni, balagan posters, old Russian lubok engravings, and the books of Dmitrii Rovinskii (he is referring here, presumably, to
the famous five-volume collection, *Russkie narodnye kartinki*, which was first published in 1881. Parallel sources amplify this information. A letter from Dikii to Zamiatin dated 5 January 1925 refers him to the full version of Leifert's *Balagany* (1922) with a view to acquiring some ideas about original showbooth posters - this implies that the source mentioned in 'Zakulisy' was consulted only towards the very end of the play's pre-production planning. Moreover, 'Narodnyi teatr' reveals that the list of sources quoted in 'Zakulisy' is far from comprehensive. Here Zamiatin mentions forms of popular theatre with roots stretching back centuries in Russian culture: the pagan Iarilo festival, wedding ceremonies, pagan funeral feasts (*trizna*), the 'fun and games' of the *skomorokhi*, the 'Furnace Play' (*peshchernoe deistvo*, not the misprinted *peshchemoe deistvo* as given in the Neimanis edition), the puppet-theatre, 'Petrushka', the folk comedy, *Tsar' Maksimilian*, and the *balagan* repertoire of Leifert, Malafeev and Berg as performed during the Shrovetide and Easter carnivals of the last century. The 'Chaldeans' (*khaldei*), or merrymen, were borrowed from Olearius's celebrated account of seventeenth-century Muscovy life: Zamiatin quotes a fragment which describes the Chaldeans with honey-soaked beards letting off fireworks and setting fire to the beards of peasant on-lookers in the period between Christmas and Epiphany. This essay reveals that he also consulted Vsevolodskii-Gerngross's historical researches into the wedding ceremony ritual, and was aware of recent attempts to revive this ritual for the modern stage - for example, Tuberovskii's *Obriadovyi teatr* group, which was formed in 1922. He also mentions Onuchkov's versions of the popular comedies *Komediia o tsare Maksimiliane* and *Komediia o
khrabrom voine Anike; while in a lecture at the State Institute of Art History (GIIL) in Leningrad in 1926, he furnished further a example of popular-theatre - Anika i Smert' - and various popular-dramas and comedies from the merryman repertoire in the North, such as O bogatom goste Terent'ishche and O Fome i Ereme.

Zamiatin's attitude towards these materials was plainly discerning. Far from incorporating them indiscriminately into his adaptation of Leskov, he was careful to assess their usefulness for the modern 'literary populist' concerned with an impression of dynamism, vitality and vigour. As a general principle, he drew a distinction between 'Theatre for the People' (teatr dlia naroda) - a pre-revolutionary movement patronised by the royal family to encourage theatre-going among the lower-classes - and 'popular theatre' (narodnyi teatr), namely, the highly idiosyncratic forms of theatre which had been developed over centuries by the lower classes themselves primarily for their own entertainment. He made the observation that, unlike other areas of popular culture, such as folk music, peasant sculpture and oral literature, modern artists had largely avoided this area of experience, exploiting only the themes of popular theatre, rather than its forms or devices. According to Zamiatin, the sole exceptions were Remizov's rusal'nye deistva, which had been written before the revolution and therefore, he felt, belonged 'in the museum' rather than on the stage; and Vasilii Kurochkin's comedy for puppets, Prints Lutonia (1872), which he found 'clumsy' and 'crude'. Zamiatin recognized that this lack of interest could, in part, be explained by the intrinsic weaknesses of popular Russian theatre itself. He
argued that ritual theatre, undeniably the 'richest' and 'most perfect' form of popular theatre, with roots stretching back to pagan times, was locked into religious forms so outmoded and obsolete that it would be impossible to breathe new life into them for a modern audience.\textsuperscript{55} Zamiatin was more impressed with the puppet-theatre, 'Petrushka', which had managed to adapt itself consistently to new conditions and survive into the modern era, even if professional playwrights had been slow to appreciate its formal potential.\textsuperscript{56} He also expressed a strong interest in the Shrovetide and Easter showbooth tradition (\textit{balagany}), which frequently skirted the boundaries of good taste and incorporated all kinds of genre material, ranging from romantic drama, to the fantastic, the harlequinade and the peep-show; sadly, playwrights had steered clear of this type of material in the past, with the result that the 'texts' were often of poor literary quality.\textsuperscript{57} A similar proviso was applied to popular comedies like Tsar\textsuperscript{'} Maksimilian, which Remizov had presented in a modern version in 1912 - Zamiatin believed that the modern audience had long outgrown the original texts, which were in any case 'banal' and 'impoverished'.\textsuperscript{58} He believed that the modern, professional artist was obliged to eliminate all the 'cheap debris' of popular theatre, combining its forms and methods with a new subject.\textsuperscript{59} As far as he was concerned, it was the unexpected twists, anachronisms and relativism of popular theatre which were its most valuable assets.\textsuperscript{60}

Bearing in mind the programmatic nature of this essay, it is curious that Zamiatin says little about the dramatic experiments of the previous two decades as far as stylized street theatre was
concerned. After all, the staging of *Blokha* followed a period of intense artistic experimentation which witnessed a veritable 'craze' for commedia dell'arte techniques in the theatrical world, ranging from Meierkhol'd's 1906 production of Aleksandr Blok's *Balaganchik* to Vakhtangov's magnificent production of Gozzi's *Turandot* in the Third Studio of the Moscow Art Theatre in 1922 (from which, in all probability, Zamiatin borrowed his ideas for the mask-changing merrymen). It was disingenuous for him to claim that professional artists had made little use of the formal devices of the showbooth tradition. Relativistic devices, metatheatre, improvisation and mask-changing had been employed consistently throughout this period, both in the sphere of mainstream theatre - witness Meierkhol'd's programmatic essays 'Uslovnyi teatr' (1907) and 'Balagan' (1912) - but also in cabarets such as the Bat Club (*Letuchaia mysh'*), the Stray Dog (*Brodichaia sobaka*) and the Crooked Mirror (*Krivee zerkalo*). The devices of Italian street theatre were also vital to the attempt after the October Revolution to establish a popular Soviet theatre, such as the 'Red Harlequinades' of Radlov's Popular Comedy theatre and the Petrograd Free Comedy theatre (especially Petrov's *A Pantomime of the Italian Comedians*, which one commentator described as 'unrestrainedly gay and witty', and a real 'theatre of the people'). The year 1922 witnessed four commedia productions running concurrently in the theatres of Petrograd alone, and if anything it might be argued that this was the zenith of an avant-garde wave which subsequently fell foul of a popular reaction against elitist experiments. The reason for Zamiatin's silence on this subject, however, may have been the cultural origins of this type of
theatre. Almost uniformly, they were based on foreign (Italian or French) models - as Douglas Clayton writes: 'The intellectual élite, who had appropriated the balagan, had preferred by and large to use foreign motifs and sources, rather than building directly on the Petrushka tradition." Benois' subtle distinction about Meierkhov'd's production of Balaganchik being 'elegant', rather than 'crude' balagan, is also very much to the point here, since the play was symptomatic of the delicate, rather effete approach of the Symbolists to popular culture generally. In contrast, despite his reservations about the 'cheap debris' of popular drama, Zamiatin and Dikii's production of Blokha aimed for a kind of lumpen authenticity, something which would give force to the word balagan as a term of opprobrium for any manifestation of disorder and scandal, rather like the English 'farce'. It was not the gaiety or merriness of the spectacle which constituted its novelty - this, undeniably, had been presented to the public before - rather, it was the crude, primitive and somewhat coarse flavour of the play which stemmed almost exclusively from genuinely Russian sources, even after the 'cheap debris' had been consigned to the rubbish bin. In this sense, the only real precursor to their adaptation was Vladimir Maiakovskii's Misteriia-Buff (1918), yet even in this case there was a strong dose of Symbolist-style, apocalyptic imagery and elements borrowed more from the 'mystery play' than authentic street experience - as one commentator noted, the entire style of the production was that of a 'grotesque à la Hoffmann'.

Blokha was possibly the first attempt to reproduce an authentic balagan experience for a mainstream, theatre-going audience.
The poster design, an eye-catching affair drawn by Kustodiev in red and black ink, was modelled on balagan originals in the possession of Leifert (his father had been the proprietor of a famous fairground booth in St. Petersburg during the late nineteenth century). The audience which arrived for the first night performance was greeted with a programme closely modelled on balagan prototypes, replete with the obligatory stishok on the opening page (Zamiatin insisted upon this at the last minute), the proud boast that 'thousands' of scientific gadgets and inventions would be on display, and ironic witticisms to accompany the descriptions of the scene settings. Employing a device which Blok had used for the first time in his play Balaganchik, the main stage curtain was raised to reveal a second curtain behind it, designed by Kustodiev in balagan style, with enormous, brightly coloured floral patterns and an image of 'The Flea' projected by magic lantern. In front of this curtain, there stood several additional props from the topography of the fairground: two cashier's booths selling tickets for the performance, posters carrying pictures of 'The Flea' and Zamiatin himself, and notice-boards advertising freak-shows ('Katia - the Educated Pig' and 'The Miracle-Woman with a Beard'). Self-evidently, the purpose of these devices was to prepare the audience psychologically for the stylized nature of the ensuing spectacle.

This took the form anticipated in Zamiatin's early letters to Dikii, with borrowings from various aspects of popular theatre. The first merryman was dressed in the outfit of a peep-show operator and entered the stage before the lifting of the main curtain to
present the play. His remarks, delivered in the *raeshnik* 's internally rhyming and doggerel style, contained references to his 'Chaldean' pedigree and his father's colourful profession as a *koza* (a young man or boy disguised in a mummer's mask who performed alongside dancing bears, one of the most ancient forms of popular entertainment in Russia). The introduction of the two other merrymen during this opening speech was typical of popular comedy, as were the subsequent costume changes. The first occurred in Act One as the first merryman donned a false beard and spectacles in order to play the 'Dutch Doctor-Apothecary' - the magical trick which he subsequently performs for the benefit of the Tsar involves restoring a 120-year-old woman to the first flush of youth and is reminiscent of the quack Dutch physician of mid-eighteenth century *lubok* designs (the merryman's speech also mimicked the traditional 'ditty' beneath the engraving in question). Cross-purpose dialogue, a humorous device typical of the puppet-theatre, is employed twice in the opening exchange between the Tsar and Malafevna (who was played by the third [female] merryman, and who later doubles up as Levsha's girlfriend, Masha, and the English girl Mary). This horseplay continued into the second act: the first merryman produces a peep-show (*raek*), together with a small *balagan* curtain and invites the local Tula townspeople to look at a famous *lubok* engraving of the Don Cossack commander, Platov. The role-changing continued to proceed apace: the second merryman, who had previously played the Imperial Messenger Boy, and not the Tsar, as announced mischievously in the Prologue, took over the role of Masha's father, the Tula merchant. In the fourth scene, comically, the first merryman played the Dutch Doctor-
Apothecary and the English Chemist-Mechanic. For the 'triumphant' conclusion, Zamiatin employed the device of reification - involving the brutal 'death' and subsequent 'miraculous resurrection' of the hero, a device derived from the puppet-theatre repertoire which had been effectively exploited both by Blok in Balaganchik and Benois in the ballet Petrushka (1910).75

True to the expectation aroused in the programme, the choice of stage-design, costumes, and props was also flagrantly showbooth inspired. It is difficult to convey this aspect of Blokha without having seen the actual production; nevertheless, the detailed discussions in the Zamiatin-Dikii-Kustodiev correspondence, in addition to Dikii's evocative memoirs of the production and the published samples of Kustodiev's set designs and costumes (devised under Zamiatin's strict supervision and later exhibited in Paris) are frequently illuminating.76 Visually, the guiding aesthetic principle was the lubok engraving - indeed, Dikii gave this as the reason for replacing the first choice set designer, Nikolai Krymov, in favour of Boris Kustodiev at a dangerously late stage in the proceedings.77 All the sets - St. Petersburg, England, and Tula - were presented as if through the eyes of the Russian peasant; in other words, eye-catchingly bright and colourful, with a hint of showbooth-style crudity and tastelessness, but nothing 'excessive'.78 The court in Act One was envisaged as a blend of 'French and Nizhnii Novgorod' imperial style, everything daubed in red, yellow and green, and impossibly large: Kustodiev's sketches show huge palm trees growing from vases with handles, their branches hanging with pears, portraits on the walls of the
Tsar's closest 'relatives' (the Turkish and Chinese emperors), and a modern stall with a festive crowd selling beer and crayfish right in front of the audience. The set of Tula has been described as 'a shiny, gaudy tray decorated with roses and firebirds': it consisted of a simple backcloth of sky and clouds, three brightly-painted green hills, a crooked izba with smoke coming out of the chimney, two large, wooden birds sitting on a tree, a small church, a fence, and a large sign saying 'Tula'.

England was presented as a mechanized hell, with screeching machines, samovar-shaped chimneys, massive cog-wheels, seats which gave off sparks, a Russian-style tavern with pot-bellied teapots carried aloft by black waiters, and a dazzlingly clean nuzhnoem esto (water-closet), replete with thermometer, flowers (for 'fragrance' and the general bon ton), and an umbrella in case the weather turned nasty. The dimensions were comic and outlandish, almost toy-town. One suggestion for Act One envisaged the Tsar's throne as the size of a children's stool. For the 'watchdog-general', Kustodiev planned a tiny hut the size of a dog's kennel which would boast an incongruously large bell - this would be rung vigorously in order to announce the arrivals of important persons, but produce only a pathetic, tinkling sound.

In the first scene, the Tsar is offered an enormous tray (two yards long!) with apples the size of a water-melon and grapes the size of apples (this is mentioned in the final stage instructions [345]). The church in Tula was only waist-high. The melkoskop (i.e. microscope) took the form of a massively large telescope almost half the size of the stage itself, which had to be carried on the shoulders of several generals; and the buremetr (barometer) consisted of a wooden bucket of water in which
floated a semi-circular piece of wood with a large javelin embedded in it. The Don Cossack horses were painted plywood figures about one-and-a-half yards long with bast manes and tails, designed to look as dashing as possible. The Cossack sleigh, so small that it was virtually impossible for anybody to get in it, was also made out of plywood (so too was the driver!).

As far as the costumes were concerned, these were bright and festive, with an element of grotesque exaggeration and cartoon-style absurdity. Kisehvrode was given a false cardboard nose which he removed only to look at the flea through the massive 'microscope' in the fourth act - photographs taken for the production show him looking almost like a clown. The generals, dressed in outrageous and fantastic combinations, were so ancient that they seemed to be physically crumbling away on the stage like sand (this metaphor was realized in practice, with a janitor employed especially for the purpose of sweeping away the particles). The Tsar was given fake, larger-than-life epaulettes, a crown which was so large that it sat on his ears, shoes which were obviously too large for him, and an absurd-looking military uniform. The merryman disguised as the English Chemist-Mechanic had a large top hat and an over-sized pocket from which dangled a grotesquely large pipe (this same character is depicted smoking this pipe in the poster). The English 'Mary' looked like a strip-tease dancer - swamped in furs, with gloves covering her entire arms, and clearly foreign, her facial features nonetheless remained recognizably Russian (she has been described as 'a snub-nosed, freckled Tula maid, weirdly arrayed, a shameless hussy and a goose' and seemed, judging from the
sketches, a sort of NEP type). The merrymen were not actually masked, as initially envisaged, but wore straw hats with little red caps and bells attached to them dangling from the front, and cloaks emblazoned with stars which they removed when changing roles; their bottom halves remained the same throughout the performance, enabling them to execute quick changes of costume while still on stage. The intention, evidently, was to make quite clear to the audience that these roles were being played by the same three actors, although in the end there were only three actual costume changes on stage: the first merrymen's transformation into the Dutch Doctor-Apothecary (345), the third merrymen's change into Malafevna (345), and the second merrymen's changing into the Imperial Messenger Boy (346).

It is clear from Dikii's memoirs that the balagan choice of stylization, something he recalled with tremendous nostalgia and evident regard, represented a considerable challenge to the actors and actresses chosen for the parts. Reared on the Stanislavskian tradition of 'realistic' method-acting, the school according to which he himself had been trained, they found themselves having to learn the art of improvisation, a technique deriving from the commedia dell'arte, so as to enter fully into the play's spirit of mischief (ozorstsvo ). Dikii mentions allowing his colleagues to 'play the fool' (durachit'sia ) during rehearsals, giving full rein to their spontaneity and comic inventiveness. It is clear from this document that the text of the play, whether the version published in 1926, or the version published in 1929, was not necessarily what actually reached the stage after rehearsals.
had taken place - indeed, Dikii's memoir of the performances provides the most lively, exuberant and evocative account of how showbooth theory was realised in practice. He recalled with relish the 'popular exultation' (vsenarodnoe likovanie) which accompanied the Tsar's entrance, with hundreds of peaked hats flung across the stage; the comic figure of Popov, who played the Tsar, with his small stomach, protruding bottom and brand new galoshes, which he placed in a corner, waiting to see whether they would stand upright or not; the generals turning their bottoms suggestively towards the audience while peering into the 'microscope' in Act Four; the rowdy entrance of the Don Cossacks in Act Two - an entire, massive, intermediiia in its own right - during which a wooden crow was shot off the roof of the church and leapt upwards into the air, sqawking, but without flapping its wings; the Ethiopian waiter in London who cleaned the table so vigorously with a cloth that sparks flew off it; the stool which, when sat upon by Levsha, caused an electric bulb to go on and off in the background; the 'spiral of sweat' released when the Cossacks physically removed the roof of the Tula gunsmiths' hut, causing everyone present to collapse, asphyxiated, to the floor; and the English toilet, which flushed all by itself with a noisy, deafening roar. In his view, this 'saucy' and 'racy' improvisation, which frequently skirted the bounds of the conventionally acceptable, was the very stuff of popular comedy.\(^{97}\)

Many of the critics who reviewed Blokha were impressed by the visual strength of the spectacle and conceded that the stylization had been an enormous success. Zamiatin was praised personally for his borrowing of balagan-style devices; Kustodiev was
congratulated for his costumes and stage-designs; and the actors were applauded for their improvised, cabaret-style acting.\textsuperscript{98} The play also proved popular with audiences. Within a month of the opening Dikii reported in a letter to Zamiatin that critical reviews had aroused curiosity and caused attendances to rise sharply.\textsuperscript{99} With some apparently major changes, about which more will be said in due course, \textit{Blokha} was successfully presented to the Bol'shoi Dramatic Theatre in Leningrad and premiered there on 25 November 1926 (Nikolai Monakhov was the director, and the stage designs and costumes were again supplied by Kustodiev).\textsuperscript{100} Apparently it played to packed audiences, after which it toured the major provincial cities.\textsuperscript{101} The play continued to appear at the Second Studio of the Moscow Art Theatre as late as 1930, after which it was taken off in order to introduce fresh material - this was supplied by Zamiatin during the winter of 1930-31 and the play was ready to reappear for the autumn 1931 season.\textsuperscript{102} The text of the play was published by the Mysl' publishing house in 1926 and quickly ran into a second edition.\textsuperscript{103} A pamphlet was also issued to coincide with the Leningrad premiere, carrying important articles by Zamiatin and Boris Eikhenbaum, along with lesser contributions by Kustodiev, Leifert and Monakhov.\textsuperscript{104} As mentioned earlier, a general discussion of the spectacle took place at the State Institute of Art History (GIII) on 20 November 1926, with Zamiatin, Eikhenbaum, the literary historian B. M. Engel'gardt, and the formalist linguist Vinogradov all participating. Vinogradov later expanded his contribution into a lecture delivered at the State Academy of Artistic Studies in Moscow on 20 January 1928, entitled 'Teoriia dramaticheskoi rechi'; while Zamiatin's lecture, 'Moia rabota nad "Blokhoi"',
formed the basis for the later essay, 'Narodnyi teatr'. 'Spin-off' products (derivaty) appeared shortly afterwards: a 'flea evening' in December 1926 in Leningrad organized by the Fizio-Geotsentricheskaia Assotsiatsiia (FIGA for short), the result of which was a humorous account of the play's conception and critical reception, Zhitie Blokhi, written by Zamiatin and later published with illustrations by Boris Kustodiev in 1929; and an orchestral suite by Iurii Shaporin, based on his original score for the Leningrad production. Zamiatin was expecting several foreign productions of the play at the time of writing his 1931 autobiography, including one in New York by the English director, A. Coates (judging by Zamiatin's collected works, which were published in Moscow in 1929, it would appear that the play had been translated into English by Zinaida Vengerova specifically for this purpose).

Despite its popular appeal, there have always been reservations about Blokha as a meaningful piece of dramatic craftsmanship. These range from the criticism that the play is merely a 'cute exercise in theatrical virtuosity' which did not respond 'in any profound way to the issues either of the theatre or of its age', to the equally serious reprimand that it was 'long-winded and literary in manner', that its language was 'irritatingly pseudo-folksy', and that as a 'supposedly fairground text [it] would have stood a good chance of being booed out of any self-respecting balagan.' Such views, while obviously not shared by the audiences of the day, are highly subjective and excessively harsh in light of the fact that Zamiatin was forced to confront dramatic exigencies which rarely applied to the puppet-theatre, raek.
pantomime, or harlequinade. There are question marks, undeniably, about the degree to which the dramatic artifice of the play was the appropriate vehicle by which to convey the tragi-comic content of Leskov's original; moreover, it is a legitimate issue whether the play succeeded in striking a credible balance between the relentless emphasis on festivity, gaiety, fantasy and slapstick comedy, all of which doubtless contributed to the enjoyment of Blokha as a visual spectacle, and the 'minor' note required by the theme of Levsha. There are several responses to this type of criticism. Even critics hostile to the play recognized that some sort of balance had been struck between 'fun' and 'seriousness' - Khersonskii, for example, identified a powerful note of melancholy and yearning (grust'-toska) in the third and fourth acts, and concluded that 'the spectacle's inner, emotional face peeped out from behind the clown's mask.' Secondly, Blokha can be shown to be an allegorical satire directed as much towards the 1920s as towards the pre-revolutionary era - topical references were constantly being updated for successive productions, hence Zamiatin's reworking of 'fresh' material in 1930-31. Thirdly, a fact closely related to the previous point, the staging of Blokha was not without a political resonance: the very choice of stylization - coarse, primitive, festive balagan - was provocative in view of the barely concealed distaste for authentic popular culture on the part of the Bolshevik authorities generally. Lastly, the interest of the play lay in the application of a novel, creative, dramatic vision to material which was relatively well known: there are ideas in Blokha which are relevant for Zamiatin as a writer and individual which deserve investigation in their own right.
As Keenan has observed, Zamiatin exploited Leskov's story in much the same way that peripatetic players used to perform the stock repertoire of popular theatre, the enjoyment of the spectators deriving from how the artist would reinterpret and refashion familiar material each time. It is more than likely that Zamiatin was aware of the political controversy which raged around the story after its publication in Aksakov's journal Rus', with some commentators accusing Leskov of slandering the Russian people. It is unclear, however, to what extent Zamiatin was ignorant of the confusion surrounding its alleged 'folk' source. In the original magazine publication, Leskov claimed that the story was based on an armoury legend expressing the pride of Russian masters in the gunsmith trade; the story's epilogue, moreover, contained a passage describing the tale as a 'legend of antiquity' and 'popular fantasy'. Subsequently, piqued by the tendency to overlook his own artistic contribution, Leskov issued an explanation in which he stressed that the story was the product of his own literary invention, not that of popular fantasy, and that the only truly popular element in the story derived from a well-known witticism, or pribautka. Despite several attempts to track down Leskov's 'folk' source, this controversy is still not convincingly resolved. Similarly, there have been various evaluations of the authenticity of Leskov's narrative persona. Largely on the basis of malapropisms which arise whenever a foreign word is introduced, this voice is commonly assumed to conform to the notion of oral narrative, i.e. skaz. Slonim writes that 'the story is told by a jester at a fair to an audience of muzhiks, small shopkeepers, and soldiers, who roar at the puns.
and adaptations of highfalutin foreign words or technical terms;\textsuperscript{115} while Keenan discusses this voice in terms of 'speech' performance.\textsuperscript{116} Yet the actual narrator reproduces few of the rhetorical devices and speech effects of Leskov's explicitly \textit{skaz} narratives. Furthermore, there is little of the syntactical arrangement of common speech in the objective statements of the author-narrator and the malapropisms are often deliberate puns which the author attributes to some of the main characters. This makes it difficult to discuss this voice in terms of 'full \textit{skaz}' - rather, it is a literary conceit, a knowing, ironic device which attempts to erect a subtle and only marginally \textit{skaz}-like screen between author and reader in order to smuggle through certain delicate themes. As is well known, these pertained to the marred brilliance of Russian invention, the 'tragic fate of the Russian genius', the superiority of 'arithmetical' Western technology as opposed to Russian scientific backwardness, and the stupidity, heartlessness and inefficiency of the Tsarist system.

If Zamiatin had reservations regarding the folk authenticity of Leskov's source, he certainly accepted the \textit{skaz} inflection of the narrative voice. In his 1926 lecture at the State Institute of Art History, he described encountering an oral version of the armoury legend in Tula itself before the revolution, and wondering whether the source of the tale might not have been Leskov himself, since the \textit{raconteuse} in question was an old woman living in a literate family.\textsuperscript{117} At the same time, in the very same discussion, he talked about an 'imaginary Tula narrator' who employed 'full \textit{skaz}' as part of the text's narrative conceit:
'Mne khotelos´ i v dannom sluchae primenit´ na stsenе polnuiu skazovuiu formu - kakaia vziata i u Leskova: ves´ rasskaz - so vsemi avtorskimi replikami - vedetsia nekim vooobrazhaemym avtorom-tuliakom . I otsiuda: vsia p´esa dolzhna byt´ razygrana nekimi vooobrazhaemymi tuliakami . Togda estestvenny budut vse "melkoskopy" v ustakh Tsaria - i togda do kontsa budet ispol´zan komicheskii effekt, zakliuchaiushchiisia v samom slovesnom materiale' (my emphases).118

In order to approximate the comic, satiric and essentially fictitious character of this narrative voice, Zamiatin devised the solution of the merrymen: they would express the ironic intent of the author and comment wittily on contemporary issues and events, all the while assaulting the ear with quick-fire repartee. Most of the malapropisms were transferred to other characters in the play, a precedent, as we have seen, deriving directly from Levsha , while the comic potential for cross-purpose dialogue in English and Russian was slightly intensified. An extremely primitive and colloquial form of dialogue was given to all the characters in the play, the Tsar included - this was also an intensification of the original, which to a certain extent lacks the raw edge of the stage version. Several speech mannerisms, a comic device typical of popular drama, were incorporated for the purpose of characterization. Platov became renowned for his stock phrases, 'm-malchat´!', 'soglasno prisiage' and 'tak i tak' (a form of verbal ellipsis which indicates that words were uttered which cannot be recalled or are unimportant).119 The Tsar
repeats the phrase 'nu, zdravstvui, chto li'. Levsha, who is markedly more incoherent and elliptical than the rest of the cast, frequently peppers his speech with 'tekhnicheskii', while Kisel´vrodé's misquoting of Russian popular sayings results in the Tsar's one and only joke during the entire play.120

A number of changes were introduced into the plot dynamic of Levsha, the result being an important shift in dramatic focus. Aleksandr I's visit to England after the Congress of Vienna was cut and replaced with a totally new scene at the Imperial Palace featuring a 'fairy-tale' Tsar, several incompetent generals, and Kisel´vrodé, the imperial foreign minister. A more significant revision, one which Zamiatin planned as early as the first draft, involved delaying the revelation of the secret that the gunsmiths have forged tiny little shoes for the mechanical flea, thus preventing it from executing its dance to music - in Blokha, this is postponed until the very final scene and becomes the climactic, defining moment of the play, unlike in Leskov, where it occurs relatively early in chapter twelve and precedes, rather than succeeds, Levsha's departure for England.121 Similarly, whereas in Levsha this oversight causes the hero little embarrassment, in Zamiatin's adaptation, by contrast, it seems to agitate him significantly and contributes ultimately to the emotional turmoil which accompanies him to his death in Act Four (386-87). The scene in London, which originally conveyed Levsha's fascination with England's technological superiority and the well organized working practices of her native inhabitants, becomes an interrogation sequence, shot with melancholic yearning for the Motherland, during which the hero is put under pressure to
reveal his secret. Further emotional pathos is supplied with the introduction of a love-figure, Masha, the daughter of a Tula merchant whom Levsha is unable to marry because he cannot afford to pay the dowry (they become the stock *innamorati* of the commedia tradition). In this context, it should be noted that while the Old Believer sympathies of the three Tula gunsmiths are retained from the original - Egupich is presented as a 'scriptural expert' (*nachetchik*) and a 'sectarian' (*kerzhatskoi very*) - Levsha's depiction as a shabby and dishevelled player of the harmonica, with 'cockroach relics' in his pockets, is purely Zamiatin's invention. As I have remarked previously, Zamiatin also transformed the ending, not only of Leskov's tale, but also of his own draft proposal as outlined to Kliucharev in February 1924: in Leskov's story, the hero returns to St. Petersburg and dies a futile death at the hands of the capital's police force before he has the opportunity to tell the court about the English superiority in musket-cleaning; in Zamiatin's draft outline Levsha is handsomely rewarded with enough money to make Masha his wife and the play ends 'happily ever after'; whereas in the final version he falls ill through inflammation of the liver, is beaten to death for no reason at all by the police after having been given a miserable reward of twenty kopecks by the Tsar, but is magically restored to life by the first merryman and disappears off stage arm in arm with his beloved Masha (Act Four, 386-87).

Keenan has argued that 'the fantasy and the spectacle [of *Blokha - PC*] form a mask to conceal "delicate material" just as the voice of Leskov's narrator ironically masked much of the meaning of the original story.' It is clear, however, that Zamiatin's attitude
towards this material was initially ambiguous. In his first letter to Dikii, he expressed doubts as to the desirability of a satirical approach. Referring to his correspondent's wish to represent Nicholas I in terms of a 'crass machine of discipline', he recorded his view that 'to make the Tsar as you project him (...) would mean going down the slippery slope towards contemporaneity (....), and that, in essence, would involve a departure from Leskov (his Tsar is not brutal at all).\(^{125}\) Likewise, in a slightly different context, he expressed his conviction that 'to kick a dead lion' (i.e. to make fun of the Tsarist era from a post-revolutionary perspective) was far too easy a task for the modern artist and had never really attracted him.\(^{126}\) This suggests that if Zamiatin had satirical ambitions at all, they were not directed towards Tsarism as such. It is evident from his subsequent remarks about *Blokha* that subversive elements did begin to creep into the play, along with the merrymen, as the process of writing gathered pace, but these related very much to contemporary events. The very decision to call the play *Blokha*, with all the attendant associations of 'biting' and 'irritation' (associations which are totally absent in Leskov, but echoed jocularly in the Zamiatin-Dikii-Kustodiev correspondence, the humorous parody *Zhitie Blokhi*, and the actual play itself) implies a transparently satirical intent.\(^{127}\) Zamiatin himself mentioned the inclusion of 'contemporary reality' (*sovremennost'*) and certain 'topical details' (*zlobodnevnost*) in 'Narodnyi teatr'.\(^{128}\) He recognized, moreover, that the carnival tradition frequently involved material with a contemporary slant: 'Komicheskoe v narodnom teatre, v Petrushke, v raeshnike', he wrote in the same essay, 'nepremeno pripravleno sol'iu satiry, vsegda ochen'
dobrodushnoi; takaia satira sostavliaet osnovnoi fon vsei "Blokhi".\textsuperscript{129} It is noteworthy that this position had been stated even more baldly in the earlier 'Moia rabota nad "Blokhoi": 'Zatem: narodnaia komediia - ne iavliaetsia chistoi komediei...
Eshche: pochti vsegda komicheskii element smeshan s satiricheskim.'\textsuperscript{130}

As published in the 1929 collected works, this satire seems to operate on two levels - the general and the particular. Topical references surface during the speeches and actions of the merrymen, in particular the one who introduces the play. His prologue alludes ironically to 'progress' and the recent electrification campaign (Lenin's ingredients for the successful establishment of communism).\textsuperscript{131} He also strictly forbids 'disturbances' (\textit{besporiadki}) during the audience's appreciation of the spectacle and makes the mistake of using the pre-revolutionary mode of address, 'Imperial Highness', to refer to the Tsar (343). In the first act, having donned a beard and glasses, he boasts the transformations of a magic stove which can take years off a man's life 'without damaging his brains' ('mozgov sovsem ne povrezhdaiu' [345]). This departs subtly from the eighteenth-century \textit{lubok} ditty mentioned previously - it involves men rather than women, although the third \textit{khaldei} is acting the part of a woman when the stove is put into operation - yet surely it is a dig at the exponents of revolutionary transformation (the fact that the merrymen, with his beard and glasses, might have resembled Trotsky, and that the machine succeeds in making its only customer both deaf and stupid only increases the irony).\textsuperscript{132} The 'difficulty' of Russia's relations with
'abroad' is mentioned by the Dutch Doctor-Apothecary in Act One ('A kak nynche u nas s zagranitsei trudnovato....' [349]). As the peep-show operator in Act Two, the first merryman refers to a recent meeting between Russian and French ambassadors, presumably a dig at the recent resumption of diplomatic relations by the two countries in October 1924, which had nevertheless not solved the problems of debt and credit negotiations (355). The raeshnik also refers mysteriously to the switching of sides by generals during a battle in China, a reference, perhaps, to the bizarre hostilities which broke out between rival warlords Wu Pei-fu and Chang Tso-lin in September 1924, which led eventually to a confusing change of government in Peking (355). Indicative of this contemporary slant is Zamiatin's use of the mocking slang term faraon, prevalent at the turn of the century to refer both to the police and, during the February Revolution, to members of the Tsarist secret police.

Although redolent of the carnival 'grandad's occasionally subversive humour, this was lightweight stuff and hardly going to cause censorship problems in the mid-1920s. More complex is the degree to which the overall theme of Leskov's story was intended to strike a modern chord. To a certain extent this aspect of the play was cleverly masked by the showbooth facade - indeed, so successful was this device that one critic remarked on how far removed Blokha seemed from the present day. Such a view is surprisingly myopic in the light of the play's content. With its 'magnificent irony with regard to everything stupid, bigoted and petty bourgeois', Blokha was just as pertinent to the experience of Soviet Russia in the 1920s as to the subjects of
the Tsars in earlier eras. It can be argued fruitfully, for example, that the decision to make the Head of State speak the same ill-educated and primitive language as his subjects might also have triggered some kind of response in the minds of an audience supposedly belonging to a newly established workers' and peasants' state; moreover, the widespread fear inspired by Platov may also have evoked contemporary parallels. The English obsession with efficiency, rationalization and mechanization (according to Dikii, England was to be envisaged as the home of technology, but filtered through the primitive imagination of the Russian peasant) might have been credited with a modern resonance in view of the explosion of constructivist art in the early 1920s and the obsession with industrial technology and automation on the part of certain Proletarian poets in the aftermath of the Revolution; indeed, Zamiatin's hostility to this kind of obsession is the theme which links the English satires and My. Viewed from this vantage point, it is worth noting the characterization of Levsha as the player of the harmonica, one whose leitmotif throughout the performance is a melancholic song about his beloved homeland which is 'strictly forbidden' by the secret policemen who club him to death and throw him into the Neva (387). Absent in Leskov, this musical motif contributes a broader artistic dimension to the simple gunsmith's identity and his 'tragic fate'. The fact that his resurrection is achieved largely thanks to a magic oven, one which Zamiatin's pre-production letters describe as taking the form of 'screens which will unfold like a harmonica', is a suggestive, symbolic image of renewal through art. Special weight is attached to Levsha's painful discovery that his work has left the flea unable to dance to music.
The phrase 'ne tantsuet', which he repeats mournfully several times in the closing scene, is interesting in the light of the role that dance and music occupy in the play generally. We recall, perhaps, that the very first 'amusement' performed by the merrymen takes the form of lyrics to the accompaniment of the guitar (Act One, [345]); that Masha, Levsha's 'beloved', is played by one of the merrymen themselves (she is the only object still 'dancing' for him after the flea has been incapacitated); and that dancing in the Prologue is associated with the profession of the first merrymen’s father, the koza or masked mummer (343). As Vinogradov noted perceptively at the time, by the end of the play Levsha has been transferred from the 'Leskovian sphere' into the symbolic sphere of the music-making entertainers, a dramatic move which has important implications for our interpretation of the play. Blokha becomes, not merely a play about the tragic fate of the talented peasant artisan - 'Zhizn' nasha - kopeika, sud'ba - indeika!', as Levsha says repeatedly during the course of the play - but also about the death of art and its renewal through music and dance.

Undoubtedly, there is a danger of interpreting Blokha too realistically and seeking meaning where there may only be flippancy, game-playing and metatheatrical devices. This conceded, there is an alternative danger of ignoring Blokha as a text incorporating meaningful, artistic motifs. Scholarly attention, for example, has only recently focussed on the stove as a symbolic image of renewal, rebirth and resurrection deriving from the Russian fairy-tale. Yet there are alternative sources for this oven motif which deserve thorough investigation and are
potentially more suggestive. The stove as a 'transforming' device in connection with the Dutch Doctor-Apothecary and the ageing Malafevna has already been mentioned in the context of contemporaneous detail; but the stove, or *pech*¹, is also associated historically with the figures of the merrymen themselves through the medieval ritual of the Furnace Play (*Peshchnoe deistvo*).¹⁴⁷

This seventeenth-century sacred ritual, a historically accurate reconstruction of which is to be found in Sergei Eizenshtein's *Ivan Groznyi*,¹⁴⁸ was performed in churches and cathedrals just prior to the celebration of Christmas - it involved three novices, or choirboys, who were placed symbolically in a burning cauldron from which they miraculously escape unharmed. Interestingly, the Furnace Play is believed to have originated from a legend recounted in the Old Testament Book of Daniel.¹⁴⁹ It tells the story of three children, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, 'youths in whom there was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability to stand in the king's place.'¹⁵⁰

These boys are taken from their families at an early age, fed, clothed and groomed at the court of King Nebuchadnezzar of the Chaldeans. However, after the king demands that all his subjects worship a gold monument wrought in his image, these three defy him and are thrown into a fiery furnace as punishment. The ritual re-enacts in symbolic terms their refusal to bow down to a wicked and godless tyrant, and their subsequent delivery by Jehovah.

It is more than likely that Zamiatin had the Furnace Play in mind when he came to consider the symbolic role of the merrymen in
The ritual theme of the play is mentioned specifically in connection with King Nebuchadnezzar and the Book of Daniel in Olearius' travelogue, just prior to the section quoted in 'Narodnyi teatr';¹⁵¹ moreover, Zamiatin refers directly to the *peshchnoe deistvo* in connection with the merrymen in both this essay and in his preface to the 1929 edition of the play.¹⁵² Two physical details from the production itself are also reminiscent of this ritual: like the stove which Kustodiev designed for the final scene of *Blokha*, the stove of antiquity actually took the form of a 'round screen' (*kruglaia shirma*) into which the novices were gradually lowered.¹⁵³ and, intriguingly enough, the 'singer's cape' presented to Levsha by the Tsar in recognition of his services in Act IV (386), just prior to his death and dramatic resurrection, was deliberately intended to transform him into a choir-boy or choral singer.¹⁵⁴ It is clear from this kind of evidence that Zamiatin chose his jester figures in *Blokha* with great care, and did so with the aim of forging links between the historical past and the present. This would help explain why he opted for the relatively obscure 'Chaldeans' in favour of the much better known carnival 'grandad' (*balagannyi ded*), 'minstrel-buffoon' (*skomorokh*), or 'bear owner' (*medvezhii vozhak*), all of whom would have been perfectly serviceable substitutes within the logic of the play's stylization. It is interesting to speculate whether this choice may have been motivated politically. The Chaldeans were pagan figures allowed to perform their fire-working trickery during specifically allocated periods of time, an allusion to the situation of 'subversive' art in the 1920s which, perhaps, would not have been lost on some members of his audience; they were also figures of fun who were expected to be
'baptised' - in other words, rejoin the ecclesiastical establishment - once this brief period of 'devilish' freedom drew to a close.\textsuperscript{155} Zamiatin himself drew a parallel between the Chaldeans setting fire to peasant beards and his own efforts to 'entertain' (\textit{podzhigat' }) his audience;\textsuperscript{156} moreover, the fact that the \textit{khaldei} were subsequently and definitively banned by the Patriarch, something also mentioned by Olearius, may have possessed a certain poignancy for Zamiatin personally. He was experiencing difficulties at the time with the publication of his dystopian novel \textit{My}, and it was also during the period of writing \textit{Blokha} that he was encountering hostility from Marxist literary critics and official censors alike regarding the publication of the privately owned journal, \textit{Russkii sovremennik}.\textsuperscript{157}

As a shipbuilder who witnessed British technology at first hand during the First World War - we recall the undisguised love for his profession expressed in 'O moikh zhenakh, o ledokolakh i o Rossii' (1932) - Zamiatin was particularly drawn to the tragic theme of Leskov's story. Having written extensively about the rational English in \textit{Ostrovitiane} and \textit{Lovets chelovekov}, he was well placed to evoke the melancholy and misery of the Russian abroad; indeed, as mentioned already in chapter five of this thesis, there is ample evidence that he himself was similarly afflicted during his stay in Newcastle. 'Englishness' was something which Zamiatin affected in outward appearance - Maiakovskii jocularly addressed him as 'Sir Zamiatin' in a verse penned in 1928\textsuperscript{158} - and to a certain extent this reflected accurately the rational and cold side of his temperament. Yet, as Remizov observed in his 1937 obituary, behind this Western countenance
could always be discerned the handsome Lebedian's beau with a parting peeping out from behind his 'engineer's crop'. This split personality is mirrored to a certain extent in the play. It is tempting to interpret the underlying melancholy in *Blokha* as Zamiatin's swan-song to his profession as a prose writer. The first merryman's remark about the 'difficulty' of going abroad is pertinent in the light of Zamiatin's difficulties with the Soviet authorities during 1922 and 1923 while applying for permanent exile; and it is not clear whether he had completely resigned from this wish at the time of writing *Blokha*, although there are hints in his 1931 letter to Stalin that he was prepared to contemplate thoughts of transforming himself into a 'writer of English' were permission ever to be granted. The mock-triumphant conclusion of the play looks forward to the future with a dash of wary optimism, and perhaps signalled the hope that a successful transition could be effected from prose writer to playwright. Such an intention was conveyed privately in a letter to Iarmolinskii in March 1925, a month after the play's first performance in Moscow. It was also symptomatic of a general trend in the artistic world during the 1920s. When Zamiatin remarked in a later newspaper interview that 'the successful playwright, who gets his 5 or 6 per cent of the box office receipts, is the only legitimate bourgeois in Russia today; and nobody interferes with his wealth', he was articulating only one reason why he and others like him were switching from one trade to the other - the main reason was the difficulty of getting their prose works published. Undoubtedly, his acceptance of the project to adapt Nikolai Leskov's *Levsha* marked a significant move away from prose writing towards work in the theatre and the cinema.
industry: *Atilla* (1925-27), *Istoriiia odnogo goroda* (1927), *Sensatsiia* (1929), *Afrianskii gost´* (1929-30), *Zhizn´ Ivana* (1931), *Siurpriz* (1931), *Podzemel´e Guntona* (1931), and the screenplays for *Peshchera* (1927), *Severnaia liubov´* (1928), and *Ela* (1931), were just a few of the projects which Zamiatin attempted to get off the ground in the last five years of his life in Russia.\(^{163}\) That this did not help him escape the tentacles of the censors is witnessed by the fact that the vast majority of these projects remained unstaged and unfinished.

*Blokha* signals the end of Zamiatin's interest in 'stylizations of Rus´'; thus it is a fitting epitaph to Zamiatin's treatment of Old Russia as a literary subject in his writing career. It would be difficult to do justice to this subject, however, without examining his close relationship with Boris Kustodiev at this period in his life. In an obituary of the painter, written in 1927 for a proposed collection of essays in his memory, Zamiatin spoke movingly of an artist whose unique and colourful vision he had only truly been able to share after it lay dead and buried (the word he used was 'deceased').\(^{164}\) He described his first, intense encounter with the 'artist' Kustodiev at a World of Art exhibition in 1912, at which his attention had been grabbed by a powerfully evocative snow-scene painting:

'Na etoi vystavke ia vdrug zatsepilsia za kartinu Kustodieva i nikak ne mog otoiti ot nee. Ia stoial, stoial pered nei, ia uzhe ne tol´ko videl - ia slyshal ee, i te slova, kakie mne slyshalis´, ia toroplivo zapisyval v kataloge - skoro tam byli ispisany vse polia. Ne znaiu nazvaniia etoi kartiny,
vspominaetsia tol’ko: zima, sneg, derev’ia, sugroby, sanki, rumianoe russkoe vesel’e - pestraia, kustodievskaiia, uezdnaia Rus’. Mozhet byt’, pomimo vsego prochego, eta kartina tak mnogo govorila mne eshche i potomu, chto sam ia v te gody zhil kak raz etimi zhe kraskami: togda pisalos’ moe “Uezdnoe”. Pravda, Kustodiev videl Rus’ drugimi glazami, chem ia - ego glaza byli kuda laskovei i miagche moikh, no Rus’ byla odna, ona soediniala nas - i vstretit’ sia ran’she ili pozhe nam bylo neizbezhno’.165

The 'inevitable' meeting did take place - ten years later - when the two artists found themselves collaborating on the book, Rus’, published in an edition of 1,000 copies by the Akvilon publishing house in March 1923. The manner in which their work inspired each other is revealed in Zamiatin's description of how this booklet came to be produced. Asked by the publishing house initially to write a review of Kustodiev's water-colours series, entitled Russkie tipy, a series modelled on the postcard designs of the pre-revolutionary era which had been extremely popular among peasants, Zamiatin spread them out on the table in front of him and became so inspired that he ended up writing a short story: Rus’.166 Their collaboration grew with increasing intensity during the early 1920s. As early as the summer of 1922, Kustodiev supplied illustrations for the emigré edition of Inok Erazm;167 one year later he designed the cover for the reprinted book edition of Uezdnoe;168 and in the winter of 1923 he painted Zamiatin's portrait.169 Their mutual admiration for each other may have been one reason why Kustodiev accepted the offer of work on Blokha, despite a crippling illness which had left him
paralyzed from the waist down. The modest account of his contribution in 'Kak ia rabotal nad Blokhoi' - a title which, curiously enough, echoed the lecture given by Zamiatin at the State Institute of Art History in the same year - does not in any way do justice to his enormous contribution to the project. It is quite clear that his designs breathed life into the production and inspired the actors who were performing the main roles; moreover, on his own admission, Zamiatin visited Kustodiev every two or three days for urgent consultations which often gave rise to new ideas, details and 'stunts' (*triuki*). The pleasure of their relationship was renewed with the comic sketch, *Zhitie Blokhi*, the illustrations for which Kustodiev supplied in revenge after reading Zamiatin's comical and satirical account of their earlier collaboration. By this time they had become close acquaintances. Zamiatin invited the ailing painter and his family to stay in his home town of Lebedian in August 1926, fixing up a small room for them to rent and accompanying them on short walks around the countryside (Kustodiev's brother, an engineer, apparently rigged up a small motorised vehicle to improve his mobility, one jokingly dubbed 'a coffin on wheels' by the local teenagers).

Zamiatin's relationship to Kustodiev and his work is a litmus test of his changing attitude towards the 'Old Russia' of his youth. 'Vstrechi s B. M. Kustodievyom' is essentially a lament for the passing of this world, one perfectly encapsulated in Kustodiev's painting. At one point quoting poignantly from an artist who came to value Kustodiev's uniqueness only after he was dead, and now realised that there was no one to replace him, Zamiatin gave
vent to a wistful and nostalgic sense of loss which he rarely revealed in public. The description of Lebedian’ which features in this obituary - the frolicking calves, the self-satisfied geese, the carts rumbling to the local bazaars on special feast-days, the old women from neighbouring villages dressed in folk costume, the rosy-red apples in the gardens, the limitless fields, and the tolling of the ancient bells dating from the times of Elizabeth, which belonged to the slightly leaning, Pisan church tower at the bottom of the road - paint a picture of rural idyll which could never have featured quite as simply or innocently in his early prose, even if many of the topographical elements were present. This was 'real', this was 'authentic' Rus', now buried by revolution and civil war. As Zamiatin admitted right at the beginning of his obituary, Kustodiev's vision of this world had been less harsh than his during the pre-revolutionary era; yet Blokha is an indication of the degree to which his attitudes towards this world had shifted, and the extent to which Kustodiev's 'red-faced' and 'colourful' gaiety had begun to infect his own vision. It was an honest reflection of the strong roots which bound Zamiatin to the region he still described as his rodina long after his parents had died. As he wrote in his 1929 autobiography: 'Dumaiu, chto esli by 1917 godu ne vernulsia iz Anglii, esli by vse eti gody ne prozhil vmeste s Rossiei - bol´she ne mog by pisat´'.

393
Ichudakova discusses the concept of the artist as skomorokh in her appraisal of *Pepel’naia Sreda* - see footnote 138 of the previous chapter.


4See ibid.

5*zamutit’* in the modern sense means simply 'to make turgid', but in earlier times it could mean 'to create disorder' or 'sow discord'. See *Slovar’ russkogo iazyka*, op. cit., vol. 1, 1981, p. 547.

6*Blokha* was published in 1926 by the Mysl’ publishing house in Leningrad under the title *Blokha: Igra v 4 d.*, and quickly ran to a second edition that same year - see 'Vozvrashchenie Evgeniia Zamiatina', op. cit., p. 55. Zamiatin made several corrections and alterations for the version which appeared in the 1929 collected works edition - see Evg. Zamiatin, *Sobranie sochinenii*, four volumes, vol. 1 (*Uezdnoe*), Moscow, 1929, pp. 173-250. Henceforth, unless otherwise stated, all references will be to the 1929 version of *Blokha* as reprinted in the Neimanis edition (II, 341-88).

7The letter in question is dated 12 November 1924. See 'Perepiska s E. I. Zamiatinym i B. M. Kustodievyym po povodu spektaklia "Blokha"', op. cit., p. 302. 'Merryman' (*khaldei*) and
'minstrel-buffoon' (skomorokh) are virtually identical in terms of their historical, satirical function, although this will be discussed in due course.

8'(...) chem bolee ser´eznoi stanovilas´ okruzhaiushchaia literatura, chem bolee ideologizirovalsia obshchestvennyi byt, tem bolee on chuvstvoval sebia, vidimo, skomorokhom, tem znachimei stanovilos´ dlia nego samogo vsevozmozhnoe shutovstvo.' See Chudakova, op. cit., p. 504.

9Zamiatin talks about being dubbed the 'Devil of Soviet Literature' in his celebrated letter of protest to Stalin (1931): 'Kak nekogda khristiane dlia bolee udobnogo olitsetvoreniiia vsiacheskogo zla sozdali cherta - tak kritika sdelala iz menia cherta sovetskoi literatury.' See 'Pis´mo Stalinu' (IV, 310-14 [310]).

10'In the Russian North and other places, peasants used the term "heretic" (eretik/eretitsa, eretnik/eretnitsa) to designate a dead sorcerer or witch that continued to inflict harm on the living.' See Ivanits, op. cit., p. 85.

11See Skaz o tul´skom kosom Levshe i o stal´noi blokhе, in N. S. Leskov, Sobranie sochinenii, eleven volumes, op. cit., vol. 7, 1958, pp. 26-59. Henceforth, for the sake of simplicity, this text will be referred to simply as Levsha.

12See "Sirin". Sbornik pervyi i vtoroi (IV, 497). Paradoxically, the organ-grinder became a symbol of lost innocence and happiness in Peshchera (1922), which shows how much Zamiatin's attitude to St. Petersburg urban realia had changed - see Peshchera (I, 453-62 [457]). This figure was already a well-known Symbolist topos by the time Zamiatin came to write his review, thus the whole extended metaphor can be viewed as deliberate and slightly mocking. See Douglas Clayton, Pierrot in Petrograd, op. cit., p. 126.

13'Zasunuli zlye liudi guttaperchevogo mal´chika v shutovskoi balakhon, k publike vypikhnuli - i nachinaet guttaperchevyi mal´chik ostroty v raek zapuskat'(...) (IV, 497); later, he writes: 'Khorosho eto - chuetseia iskra Bozh´ia, i tem khuzhe: potomu chto ot toi Bozh´ei iskry Andrei Belyi zazheg fonari v plokhom balagane.
После Андрея Белого читать Блока - все равно что из чадного балагана выйти в мракную ночную тишь' (IV, 498-99).

14*Kuny* (III, 77-83).

16See the chapter entitled 'Рули испорчен' in Ostrovitiane (I, 294-346 [316-321]).

17'Iarmarka - на ярмарку с неё. (....) балаганы, лотки, ржаные, расписные, архангельские козули, писк глиняных свистульек, радужные воздушные шары у ярославца на низке, с музыкой крутится карусель.' See *Russ* (II, 44-53 [47]).

18'M. Gor'kii' (IV, 183-84).

19'From the visual point of view the signs and posters were extremely close to the *lubok*, both in colour and humour, as well as in the way the material was presented, the relationship to the object depicted, and the way they were targeted at the popular audience with their folkloric perception of the visual forms of the fair.' Anna Nekrylova, quoted in Douglas Clayton, op. cit., p. 126.

20'Oдним из главных качеств *Русы*, как всегда у Замятова, была языковая фонетика. Замятин сам говорил, что "надо было дать драматизированный сказ". Но - не сказ половины, как у Ремизова, где авторские ремарки тол'ко слегка окрашены иязыком сказа, а полны, как у Лескова, когда всё ведётся от лица воображаемого автора одним иязыком. В "Блоке" драматизируется тип полного сказа.' See Annenkov, *Dnevnik moikh vstrech*, op. cit., p. 266.

See the excerpts from Dikii's memoirs entitled 'Iz knigi "Povest' o teatral' noi iunosti"', in A. Dikii, Stat' i. Perepiska. Vospominaniia, op. cit., pp. 357-64 [pp. 357-58].

Shutochnaia miniatiura <Zhltie Blokhi >([II, 507-517 [517, note 3]). This was originally published in Leningrad in 1929 under the title Zapisannoe Evgeniem Zamiatinnym Zhitie Blokhi ot dna chudesnogo ee rozhdeniia i do priskorboi konchiny, a takzhe svoeruchnoe B. M. Kustodieva izobrazhenie mnogikh proishhestvii i lits. A reprinted facsimile edition, personally signed by Zamiatin as a present to the director, A. Dikii, is available in Evgenii Zamiatin, Sochineniia, op. cit., pp. 155-96.

Zamiatin received a formal invitation to adapt the story for the stage in a letter dated 18 January 1924 from Viktor Pavlovich Kliucharev, the actor in charge of the Moscow Art Theatre's repertoire. Interestingly, this letter mentions an informal proposal already made by Dikii. See the notes to Zamiatin's letter to Kliucharev dated 3 February 1924, in 'Perepiska', op. cit., p. 285.

In Dikii's first letter to Zamiatin, dated 10 February 1924, he refers to an informal discussion which had taken place in Moscow, not in Leningrad (ibid, p. 285). The date of this discussion can be pinpointed with greater accuracy by referring to a letter from Zamiatin to his wife dated 9 September 1923, which mentions a planned meeting with Dikii at the Moscow Art Theatre for later on that very same day. See "'Milaia Mila Nikolaevna"... Pis'ma E. Zamiatina k zhene (1918-1923 gg)' , op. cit., 11, p. 102.

'ZakuUsy' (IV, 302).

'Esli by pesa khot' v konturakh, khotia by v chernovikakh byla uzhe gotova, mozhno bylo by raspredelit' roli i mechtat' o dal'neishem, a seichas ia priamo govoriu - vse visit v vozdukhe po prichine Vashego vesennogo legkomyslia.' See the letter from Dikii to Zamiatin dated 'before' 7 May 1924, in 'Perepiska', op. cit., p. 296.

The information regarding the deadline is given in the editor's notes, ibid., p. 285.

Dikii's letter to Zamiatin dated 23 October 1924, ibid., p. 297.
Zamiatin’s letter to Dikii dated 30 October 1924, ibid., pp. 298-300.

Zamiatin’s letter to Dikii dated 17 December 1924, ibid., pp. 314-17.

See, for example, Keenan, op. cit., pp. 66 & 71.

Zamiatin’s use of the word *skazka* is problematic here, since he does not distinguish between the ‘folktale’ (*skazka*) and the ‘fairy-tale’ (*volshebnaia skazka*). However, judging from Zamiatin’s remarks in his letter to Kliucharev about the ‘fabular basis’ (*basnoslovnyi sklad*) of Leskov’s original story, the ‘fabular tones’ (*tona skazochnye*) with which he wanted to imbue his stage adaptation, and his reference to Gozzi in a later letter to Dikii, it seems reasonable to assume he means ‘fairy-tale’ in this particular context. See ‘Perepiska’, op. cit., pp. 281 & 290.


‘My dolzhny zaostrit’, usilit’ ego glavnuiu mys’l’, a glavnaia mys’l’ Leskova - ne skazka, a mys’l’ skazki - sud’ba russkogo geniia. Pust’ budet konets leskovskii vypadat’ iz skazki, neskol’ko snizhat’ obshchii ton v minor, no etc, i imenno etc, delaet proizvedenie tsennym (smert’ Levshi).’ See Dikii’s letter to Zamiatin dated ”before” 1 March 1924, ibid., p. 294.

‘Naschet roli khaldeev v IV akte - vot kakie u menia byli mysli, kogda ia pisal etot akt: v pervykh dvukh aktakh - bezogliadnaia, bez vsiakoi teni, igra; v tret’em akte skvoz’ igru chut’-chut’, izredka progliadyvaet ser’eznoe - Levsha zatoskoval
po Rasee; i v chetvertom akte eto ser'eznoe vse bol' she vykhodit
na pervyi plan, a igra i glavnoupolnomochennye igry - khaldei -
otstupaieot nazad, v ten'. See Zamiatin's letter to Dikii dated 30
October 1924, ibid., p. 299.
37See ibid.
38For the first draft, see Zamiatin's letter to Kliucharev dated 3
February 1924, ibid., pp. 281-85 [p. 284]. Compare this with the
final version as published in Neimanis (II, 386-88).
39See Dikii's letter to Zamiatin dated 10 February 1924, in
40See Dikii's letter to Zamiatin dated 'before' 1 March 1924, ibid.,
p. 294.
41Zamiatin's letter to Kliucharev dated 3 February 1924, ibid., p.
282.
42See ibid, p. 281. The two tsars mentioned here by Zamiatin
refer to the Pushkin verse tales, Skazka o tsare Saltane (1831)
and Skazka o zolotom petushke (1834), both of which had been
adapted for stage by Nikolai Rimskii-Korsakov in the first decade
of the twentieth century and subsequently attained the status of
opera classics. Tsar 'Saltan', an opera in four acts with a libretto
by V. Bel'skii, was premiered in Moscow on 21 October 1900.
Although Zolotoi petushok was staged for the first time on 24
September 1909 at the Zimin Theatre in Moscow, its most famous
production was Diagilev's Le Coq d'or, premiered in Paris on 24
May 1914 with stage designs by Natal'ia Goncharova (it should be
noted that the name of Tsar Dadon in Pushkin's original was
altered to Dodon in the Bel'skii libretto). Zamiatin was probably
acquainted with both these operas, but undoubtedly knew
Remizov's adaptation of the Arabian legend, Tsar 'Dodon', which
was published in Zavetnye skazy in 1920 and published in a
separate book edition with illustrations by Lev Bakst in 1921. See
Remizov, Bibliographie, op. cit., pp. 53-54.
43Zamiatin's letter to Dikii dated 22 February 1924, in
44Ibid., p. 292.
45'Narodnyi teatr' (IV, 424-29) and 'Zakulisy' (IV, 302). The
former was first published in Blokha. Igra v 4. d. Evg. Zamiatina,
Leningrad, 1927, along with contributions by the formalist literary critic, Boris Eikhenbaum ('Leskov i literaturnoe narodnichestvo'), the director of the Leningrad production, Nikolai Monakhov ('Mysli rezhissera'), the stage designer, Boris Kustodieiev ('Kak ia rabotal nad Blokhoi'), and excerpts from A. F. Leifert's memoirs ('Balagany'). This pamphlet should not be confused with the text of the play's Moscow production, *Blokha: Igra v 4 d.*, which was first published in 1926 (see footnote 6 of the present chapter).

46See 'Zakulisy' (IV, 302). See also Dmitrii Rovinskii, *Russkie narodnye kartinki*, five volumes, plus atlas of pictures, St. Petersburg, 1881 (second edition, St. Petersburg, 1900).

47Dikii's letter to Zamiatin dated 5 January 1924, in 'Perepiska', op. cit., p. 333.

48'Narodnyi teatr' (IV, 424 & 426). The mistake regarding the 'Furnace Play' (*Peshchnoe deistvo*) becomes apparent if we compare the Neimanis edition of this essay with the original - see *Blokha. Igra v 4 d. Evg. Zamiatina*, op. cit., p. 4.

49'Oni poluchali ot patriarkha razreshenie v techenie vos’ mi dnei pered Rozhdestvom i vplot’ do Kreshcheniaiia begat’ po ulitsam s osobym feierverkom, prichem oni podzhigali borody prokhozhim... Odety oni byli kak vo vremia maslenichnogo riazhen’ia: na golovakh u nikh byli dereviannye razmalevannye shliapy, a borody ikh byli vymazany medom, chtoby ne zagorels’ ot ognia, kotoryi oni razbrasyvali.' See 'Narodnyi teatr' (IV, 429).

50Ibid., p. 426.

51The title of this lecture, which was delivered on 20 November 1926 just prior to the play's opening in Leningrad, is 'Moia rabota nad "Blokhoi"'. The text is preserved in the IMLI archive, fond 47, opis’ 1, ed. khr. 202, and has recently been published as part of E. Barabanov's commentary to 'Narodnyi teatr', as published in Evgenii Zamiatin, *Sochineniia*, op. cit., pp. 570-72, (p. 572).

52'Narodnyi teatr' (IV, 424).

53Ibid. (IV, 425). *Rusal’ nye deistva* was the title given to several works published in volume eight of Remizov's pre-war collected works, three of which were conceived as medieval mystery plays. They were: *Besovskoe deistvo* (1907), *Tragediiia o Iude* (1908)

54 'Esli bez vsiakogo blagochestiia, bez umihtel noi slezy (slezy vsegda meshaiut videt') podoiti k nashemu narodnomu teatru vplotnuiu, to my uvidim, chto v bol'shi v bol'shi svoei chasti - eto naimenee sovershennaia, naimenee zrelaia iz vsekh form narodnogo tvorchestva'. See 'Narodnyi teatr' (IV, 425).

55 Ibid. (IV, 425-26).

56 Zamiatin was referring to the modern puppet-theatre of Simonovich and Efimova, who, in his view, had successfully incorporated post-revolutionary material into the traditional Petrushka repertoire. He also mentions the Stravinsky ballet Petrushka (1910), but argues that it had exploited only the 'theme', rather than the 'form' of the puppet-theatre. See ibid. (IV, 426).

57 Ibid. (IV, 426-27).

58 Ibid. (IV, 427).

59 'Nuzhno drugoe: rudu narodnogo teatra propustit' cherez mashinu professional' noi obrabotki, nuzhno otseiat' ves' nalipshii v tsarskoi kazarme, v kabake musor, nuzhno ispol'zovat' ne temy, a formy i metody narodnogo teatra, spaiav ikh s novym siuzhetom.' See ibid. (IV, 427).

60 'Mne kazalos' naibolee podkhodiashchim nazvat' "Blokhu" igroi: istinnyi narodnyi teatr - eto, konechno, teatr ne realisticheskii, a uslovnii ot nachala do kontsa, eto imennoe - igha, daiushchaia polnyi prostor fantazii, opravdyvaiushchaia liubye chudesa, neozhidannosti, anakhronizmy' (emphasis in the original). See ibid. (IV, 428).

61 Douglas Clayton, op. cit., p. 6. The three 'commedia' characters whom Zamiatin mentions in his first letter to Dikii - Brighella, Pantaloni and Tartaglia - are actually the key masked figures in Turandot.

62 Ibid., pp. 87-88.

63 K. Sergei, cited in ibid., p. 115.
The original idea for the poster seems to have come from Dikii. In a letter to Zamiatin dated 23 October 1924, he writes: 'Nado sostavit’ tekst afishi, kotoruiu my khotim sdelat’ ne obychnoi, a ot formy vsego spektaklia - krasochnoi i balagannoi' - see 'Perepiska', op. cit., p. 297. Zamiatin responds in his letter of 30 October 1924: 'Vasha zateia s afishei - ochen’ liubopytna. Takaia afisha ravnosil’ na vystupleniiu raeshnika pered spektaklem: ona srazu otkroet zriteliu kharakter spektaklia. No delo eto tonkoe: odno - slushat’ raeshnye slova v okruzhenii sootvetstvuiushchei muzyki, zhestov i krasok, drugoe - chitat’ ikh napechatannymi: napechatatannye - oni zvuchat gorazdo grubee, i tut vybirat’ ikh nado podumavshi 'chitat’ ikh napechatannymi: napechatatannye - oni zvuchat gorazdo grubee, i tut vybirat’. See ibid., p. 299. Much later, in his letter to Zamiatin dated 5 January 1925, Dikii recommends Leifert's book on balagan theatre for help with the design of the poster and programme - see ibid., p. 333. This was obtained, but proved unsatisfactory: Zamiatin decided to seek out Leifert himself in person, after which he promised to send the text and the design (Kustodiev's) as soon as possible - see his letter to Dikii dated 9 January 1925, ibid., p. 337. This seems to be have been done at some point prior to Dikii's letter of 17 January 1925, in which he announces himself satisfied both with the original concept and the final result: 'S afishei vy popali v tochku - ona dostavila vsem bol’shoe udovol’stvie.' See ibid., p. 342. The text of the poster is reproduced in ibid., p. 342; while a printed colour version is available in Lebedeva, Boris Kustodiev. The Artist and his Work, op. cit., illustration no. 87. Nota bene: this is the English translation of Lebedeva's Boris Mikhailovich Kustodiev, op. cit., and will henceforth be referred to simply as the 'English version'.
The balagan programme is reprinted in 'Prilozenie k "Blokhe". Postanovochnye materialy k p'ese "Blokha"' (II, 503-06). Zamiatin made a special point about the 'little poem' in his letter to Dikii dated 23 January 1925: 'Stishki (na 1-i str[anitse]) ne neobkhodimy, no na starykh balagannyakh programmakh v takom rode stishki chasto byvali.' See 'Perepiska', op. cit., p. 345.

The balagan style of this curtain is first mentioned in Zamiatin's letter to Dikii dated 7 December 1924, and was originally envisaged in the form of the word 'Blokha' in capital letters, accompanied by two large medallions, one with a picture of Levsha and the other with a picture of the Tsar - see ibid., p. 312. In his next letter, he writes: 'Ego [Kustodiev's - PC] proekt zanavesa s portretami deistvuiushchikh lits - ochen' tipichen dla balagannogo zanavesa; portrety, konechno, sovershенно neveroiatnye i nepokhozhie (kak v balaganakh i byvaet)'. Emphasis in the original. See ibid., p. 316. In a letter to Kustodiev dated 26 December 1924 (ibid., p. 322), Dikii suggested the possibility of decorating the entire auditorium in the style of the balagan, but this was rejected because of the size and 'sobriety' of the Second Studio - see Zamiatin's letter to Dikii dated 31 December 1924 (ibid., p. 326). For the actual stage production, it seems that the word 'Blokha' was replaced by an image of the flea projected on to the curtain by means of a magic lantern. See Lebedeva (Russian version), op. cit., p. 72; and Lebedeva (English version), illustration no. 87. For a description of the first stage production of Blok's Balaganchik, see Douglas-Clayton, op. cit., pp. 138-45.

For the popularity of 'freak-shows' at the authentic showbooth, see the excerpts from A. Leifert, Balagany, in Bloka. Igra v 4 d. Evg. Zamiatina, op. cit., pp. 23-27 [p. 24].

Chtoby Prologom srazu zhe okunut' zriteha v tip spektaklia - v Prologue est' tot zhe dukh Raeshnika, chto i v drugikh mestakh p'esy, - s raeshnoi rifmovkoi - tak pokazalos' mne pravil' nei. V Prologue Raeshnik - ochen' korotko - izlagaet svoiu "biografiu iz zhizni", no tam daetsia ego teatral'naia rodoslovaia - ego rod idet
ot khaldeev i ot priskazok vozhaka pri uchenom medvede.'

Emphasis in the original - see Zamiatin's letter to Dikii dated 17 December 1924, in 'Perepiska', op. cit., pp. 314-15. For the antiquity of the dancing bear performances, see Douglas Clayton, op. cit., p. 126.

73'Ob' iavliau ia svoi nauki, chtob stariki ne zevali ot skuki: starikov molodymi v pechis perepravliau i pri etom mozgov sovsem ne povrezhdaiu' (345). This is clearly taken from the ditty at the bottom of a lubok engraving entitled Galanskoi lekar' i dobroi aptekar', the original version of which derived from I. Akhmet'ev's factory in the mid-eighteenth century. The original version can be found in Rovinski, op. cit., vol. 1, illustration no. 211 with a commentary in vol. 4, p. 313. A more recent version, dating from the 1820s, is reproduced with the text in Sytova, (ed.) The Lubok. Russian Folk Pictures op. cit., illustration no. 90.

The theme of the quack physician was a favourite of the pantomime tradition. According to Leifert, one of the standard repertoires during the Shrovetide and Easter balagan was entitled: 'Volshebaia mel'nitsa; gde prevrashchau starukh v molodykh - pantomima'. See the excerpts from Leifert, Balagany, in Blokha. Igra v 4 d. Evg. Zamiatina, op. cit., p. 26.

Further examples of cross-purpose dialogue in the 'Petrushka' puppet-theatre are given in Kelly, op. cit., p. 82.

75Dismemberment and reconstitution is essentially a conceit from the 'Petrushka' repertoire - see Kelly, op. cit., p. 95. In his memoirs of childhood, Benois recalls scenes from Egorov's balagan theatre in the late nineteenth century in which a similar device is used (probably borrowed from the pantomimes of Deburau's Théâtre des Funambules). Douglas Clayton speculates that this might be the source for the resurrections of Pierrot in Balaganchik and the puppet-hero of Igor Stravinsky's Petrushka.
See Douglas Clayton, op. cit., pp. 129 & 136-45. The popular comedy *Tsar’ Maksimilian* also employed this device, and is mentioned by Zamiatin in a letter to Dikii dated 22 February 1924: 'Vspomnите khotia by "tsaria Maksimiliana" (Ne Remizovskii variant, a podlinnyi): kaznennyi Adol’ fa v kontse vskakivaet zhiven’ kii, zlodei Maksimilian gibnet.' See 'Perepiska', op. cit., p. 291.

It should be borne in mind that Kustodiev produced two separate and completely independent sets of designs for the Moscow and Leningrad productions which radically differed from each other. It is important to bear this in mind as far as his published sketches are concerned. Some of his costume and stage-prop sketches for the play are available in colour - see Lebedeva (English version), op. cit., illustrations 70, 73, 74, 86-93, & 111. The Russian version has two prints in colour (op. cit., pp. 70-71 & 72-73), and the remainder in black-and-white: see ibid., pp. 164-67.

It should be borne in mind that Kustodiev produced two separate and completely independent sets of designs for the Moscow and Leningrad productions which radically differed from each other. It is important to bear this in mind as far as his published sketches are concerned. Some of his costume and stage-prop sketches for the play are available in colour - see Lebedeva (English version), op. cit., illustrations 70, 73, 74, 86-93, & 111. The Russian version has two prints in colour (op. cit., pp. 70-71 & 72-73), and the remainder in black-and-white: see ibid., pp. 164-67.

Kustodiev's instructions via the person of Dikii to the artists carrying out the work on the spot are instructive: 'Konechno, Vashi khudozhniki prekrasno spraviatsia s pisaniem dekoratsu, v kotorykh nichego zamyslovatogo net; nado tol’ko, chtoby byl ochen’ bodryi, zvonkii i veselyi tsvet. Balagannaia ahapovatost’, -no v granitsakh, - ne perekhodiashchaia v besshabashnuui razmalevannost’ (emphasis in the original). See Kustodiev's letter to Dikii dated 6 January 1925, in 'Perepiska', op. cit., p. 335.

Lebedeva (Russian version), op. cit., p. 73.

See ibid., and Lebedeva (English version), illustration no. 90. The Leningrad set was somewhat different, with a chintz-blue sky, white polka-dot snow, pink gingerbread houses, and a
bearded Tula native drinking tea from a samovar the size of a house. See ibid., illustration no. 91.

The water-closet was a controversial addition to the stage-design. Dikii originally gave instructions concerning the toilet scene in Act Three in a letter to Kustodiev dated 5 January 1925 - see 'Perepiska', op. cit., p. 331. Both Zamiatin and Kustodiev felt that it would be inappropriate and tasteless. In a letter to Dikii dated 16 January, Zamiatin argued that this sort of stunt had already been pulled (and with greater crudity) by Meierkhol’d in his production of Zemlia dybom (1923) - see ibid., p. 341. Kustodiev described the toilet as an "unappetizing" establishment' in a letter to Dikii dated 20 January - see ibid., p. 344. Nevertheless, Dikii was insistent and Kustodiev executed the design as requested, sending it to Moscow with a short note of description as follows: 'aglitskoe nuzhnoe mesto, belyi kafel’, mednyi kran, stekliannyi gradusnik, zontik, chtoby sidiaschchii tam zashchishchen byl ot dozhdia i solntsa, tsvety dla dukha, i dla priiatnosti.' Cited in Lebedeva (Russian version), op. cit., p. 73.

This is mentioned in Zamiatin's letter to Dikii dated 20 December 1924, although it is not clear from the stage instructions in the text whether it was accepted or not. See 'Perepiska', op. cit., p. 317.

Instructions from Dikii to Kustodiev on this matter were conveyed in his letter dated 22 December 1924: 'Loshadi narisovany na fanere - predel’ noi likhosti. Duga, kolokol’chiki,
bubentsy, sani - krasochnye, prazdnichnye, kak na maslenitse (....). Tri kazaka verkhom na loshadkakh - loshadki arshina v poltora, iz fanery s mochal'nym khvostom i grivoi; nozdri, polozhenie khvosta, nog - neobychnaiia likhost'. Emphasis in the original. See ibid., p. 320.

87. Kustodiev's letter to Dikii dated 31 December 1924, ibid., p. 329.

88. For the false nose, see Kustodiev's letter to Dikii dated 31 December 1924, ibid., p. 327. For a photograph of Kisel'vrode, as played by the actor A. A. Geirot in the Moscow production, see A. Dikii, Stat' i. Perepiska. Vospominaniiia, op. cit., between pp. 160 and 161.

89. The costume designs for the generals are given in Lebedeva (English version), op. cit., illustration no. 73.; and Lebedeva (Russian version), op. cit., p. 167. See also the stage instructions in the Neimanis edition (344).


91. Lebedeva (English version), op. cit., illustration no. 87.

92. '(...) kurnosala i konopataia tul'skaia deva - tol'ko chudnó nariazhena, durekha i besstydntsia.' See Lebedeva (Russian version), op. cit., p. 74 & the colour illustration between pp. 72-73.


94. Stanislavskii was a close friend of Dikii's, and his school of acting has been described as the latter's 'alma mater'. See Z. Vladimirova, 'Aleksei Dikii', in A. Dikii, Stat' i. Perepiska. Vospominaniiia, op. cit., p. 18.

95. Dikii, 'Iz knigi....' op. cit., p. 359.

96. Ibid.

97. Ibid., pp. 359-61.

98. See, for example, Khersonskii's review in Izvestiia, 12 February 1925; and Markov's article in Pravda, 14 February 1925, fragments of which are reprinted in 'Perepiska', op. cit., pp. 351-53.
99"Blokha" delaet sbory. Pressa, kak i polagaetsia ei, ni cherta ne poniala v etom spektakle i svoim raznoboem tol'ko usilila interes k spektakliu [...]." See Dikii's letter to Zamiatin dated 12 March 1925, ibid., p. 351.
100See Zamiatin's forward to the 1929 edition as reprinted in Neimanis (II, 342).
102Ibid.
103See footnote 6 of the present chapter.
104See footnote 45 of the present chapter.
105See the commentary to Vinogradov, 'Problema skaza v stilistike', op. cit., p. 329. See 'Moia rabota nad "Blokhoi"', op. cit.
106See note 23 of the present chapter.
109Leskov claimed explicit folk origin for the tale in a footnote to the magazine publication in 1881, assigning himself only the role of transcriber; this became a 'preface' for the 1882 book edition of the story. The explanation, 'O russkom levshem (literaturnoe ob'iasnenie) ', took the form of a letter to Novoe vremia and the footnote was excised from the collected works edition of 1889. The witticism in question ran as follows: 'Anglichane iz stali
blokhu sdelali, a nashi tuliaiki ee podkovali da im nazad otoslali.'
116'All we know about the narrator of Levsha is how he talks, his manner of speech.' See Keenan, op. cit., p. 67.
117'(...), eshche do revoliutsii mne dovelos' v g. Epifani Tul'skoi gubernii slyshat' ustnyi skaz na etu zhe temu, po pravde govoria, osobenno etot ustnyi skaz menia ne zainteresoval. Etot ustnyi skaz predstavial soboi ochen' sokrashchennoe i szhatoe izlozhenie leskovskogo rasskaza, tak chto, pomnui, prikhodila dazhe v golovu mysli', ne byl li dazhe Leskov istochnikom ustnogo skaza - tem bolee, chto rasskazchitsa, starukha, zhila v gramotnoi sem'e (....). Ustnyi skaz po slovesnoi tkani byl blednee leskovskogo, a tak kak, povtoriaiu, opredeljaiushchih rol' sygrala slovesnaia storona, to leskovskii skaz, khotja on i byl vtoristochnikom, iavilsia opredeljaiushchim faktorom.' Cited in the commentary to 'Narodnyi teatr', in Zamiatin, *Sochineniia*, op. cit., pp. 570-71.
118Ibid., p. 571.
119Four versions are given of Platov's first mannerism: 'mmalchat'!' (361), 'm-malchat'!' (364), 'ma-alchat'!' (365) and 'm-malch...' (365).
120Leskov compared the witticism about the mechanical flea to a similar saying about the Germans: 'Chto zhe kasaetsia samoi podkovannoi tuliakami angliiskoi blokhi, to eto sovsem ne legenda, a koroten'kaia shutka ili pribautka, vrode "nemetskoi obez' iany", kotoruiu "nemets vydumal", da ona sadit'sia ne mogla (vse prygala), a moskovskii mekhovshchik "vzial da ei khvost prishil - ona i sela"' (emphasis in the original). Cited in the commentary to Leskov, *Levsha*, op. cit., p. 501. Kisel'vrod'e's comic reversal of this joke, one which rebounds because he himself is German, occurs in Act One of *Blokha*:


Tsar'. Tebia vot deistvitel'no obez' iana vydumala!' (347).


124 Keenan, op. cit., p. 72.

125 'Sdelat' tsaria takim, kak Vy ego proektiruete ("Tupaia mashina distsipliny"), - eto znachit poiti po skol'zkoii dorozhke prisposoblenii k sovremennosti (- ? Nameki u Leskova), i eto znachit po sutii razoitis' s Leskovym (tsar' u nego vostve ne zveroobraznyi).' See Zamiatin's letter to Dikii dated 22 February 1924, in 'Perepiska', op. cit., p. 292.

126 'O mertvoi - teper' ne khotelos' govorit' tak, kak mozhno bylo govorit' o zhivoi; liagat' izdokhshego l'va - eta legkaia pobeda menia ne prel'shchala.' The subject in question, one quite relevant for Blokha, is the short story Rus'. See 'Vstrechi s B. M. Kustodievyim' (IV, 167).

127 It is not clear who decided to call the play Blokha, or when this decision was taken, but it is significant that Zamiatin puns on the title in his very first letter to Klucharev and Dikii: 'Chestr imeiu Vas uverit', chto leskovskaiia blokha menia ukusila tak zdorovo (....)' - see Zamiatin's letter to Klucharev dated 3 February 1924, in 'Perepiska', op. cit., p. 281; and later: 'Vot v chem gore: kak ona, blokha, est' sushchestvo ochen' pryuchee, to i vyshlo, chto ukusila ona menia i Vas v ochen' raznykh mestakh' - see Zamiatin's letter to Dikii, 22 February 1924, ibid., p. 290.

This idea is worked into the play by means of the first merryman's initial tune: "Drita-drita-drita-drita,/Kak ottsu arkhimandritry/Bloshka spat' ne daet:/Uzh ona ego kusaet/Tselu noch' naprolet.(....)" (Act One, 345).
128 'Kstati skazat', cherez anakhronizmy v siuzhet igry, vziatyi iz tsarskikh vremen, s bol'shim udobstvom mozhet voiti sovremennost', dazhe zlobodnevnost'. See 'Narodnyi teatr' (IV, 428).
129 Ibid.
130 Zamiatin, Sochinenia, op. cit., p. 571.
131 Keenan, op. cit., p. 72. In the programme, moreover, Act Two is mockingly described in terms of the 'blossoming of industrialization and living roses in the town of Tula.' See 'Prilozhenie k <Blokhe>' (II, 504).
132 There is a further irony in the fact that in the original lubok engraving the quack physician hits the women three times while they are in the furnace in order to effect his cure. See the text quoted in Sytova (ed.), op. cit., illustration no. 90.
133 The resumption of diplomatic relations took place on 28 October 1924, seven years after the October Revolution, and the first Soviet Ambassador to Paris was appointed two months later. See E. H. Carr, Socialism in One Country, three volumes, vol. 3, part 1, London, 1964, p. 42. The 'howling' (revmia revut [355]) refers perhaps to the mutual public recriminations which followed owing to the two governments' inability to reach an amicable settlement over the question of debts and credits. See ibid., p. 45.
134 A decisive part of the battle was the desertion of Wu Pei-fu's principal lieutenant in the north, Feng Yu-hsiang, on 16 September 1924. Roughly a month later, on 23 October 1924, he seized Peking on his own account and set up a provisional government with Tuan Ch'i-Jui at its head. According to Carr, this caused a considerable amount of confusion in Moscow at the time. See ibid., vol. 3, part 2, pp. 711-12. Zamiatin has altered the names for comic effect: General Pei-chaiu (Drink-Tea) and General Chei-syn (Whose-Son).
135 For the colloquial meaning of faraon, see Slovar' russkogo iazyka, op. cit., vol. 4, 1984, p. 553. The initial mention of these 'pharoahs' occurs in Act III. The English 'master' is showing Levsha a 'keramid' (pyramid) in which he says are buried the 'amazing Egyptian pharoahs'. Levsha replies: 'U nas etikh samykh samykh
faraonov - khot´ prud prudi: v Moskve na kazhdom uglu stoiat vrode dlia besplatnogo udivleniia. A vy eto sameoe.... ikh za den´gi pokazyvaete. Nu, i ch-da-ki! (373). The Russian 'pharaohs' are mentioned pointedly again by Levsha at the moment he is about to be beaten up and thrown in the Neva by the local police: 'Vot, brat, u vas, eto za den´gi, a u nas... fr-fr-faraony besplatno...vrode...' (387). It is worth noting that the term is not employed by Leskov.

137 Khersonskii, op. cit., p. 352.
138 (...) velikolepnaia ironia nad vsem duratskim, meshchanskim, kosnym.' See Lebedeva (Russian version), op. cit., p. 75.
139 Keenan, for example, views Platov as a modern-day 'commissar'. See Keenan, op. cit., p. 74.
141 The manner in which My parodies the work of the proletarian poets is examined in K. Lewis and H. Weber, 'Zamyatin's "We", the Proletarian Poets and Bogdanov's "Red Star"', Russian Literature Triquarterly, 12, 1975, pp. 253-78. The way in which the utopia described in My grows out of Zamiatin's satirical portrait of the English middle-classes is analysed in T. R. N. Edwards, Three Russian Writers and the Irrational, op. cit., pp. 36-86. Interesting light has also been shed on Zamiatin's working environment in Newcastle and the imagery in My in A. Myers, 'Evgenii Zamiatin in Newcastle', The Slavonic and East European Review, 68, 1990, pp. 91-99, and 'Evgenii Zamiatin in Newcastle: A Source for "Islanders"', ibid, 1990, pp. 498-501.
142 Zamiatin's letter to Dikii dated 20 December 1924, in ibid., p. 317.
143 'T-tol´ko ona u menia i....i tantsuet...' (387).
144 The parallel between the 'dancing bear' and the 'dancing flea' has also been made explicit in these opening remarks.
145 «Ia govoril o razryve dvukh linii v "Blokhe": "Levsha" ostaetsia kak "obraz" to v "leskovskoi" literaturnoi sfere, to vvolekaetsia v krug komediinykh masok sovsem inogo emotional'nogo tona." This remark, in which Vinogradov recounts his contribution to the GIII discussion the previous day, is contained in his letter to N. M. Malysheva dated 21 November 1926, cited in the commentary to 'Problema skaza v stilistike', op. cit., p. 329.

146 Goldt, op. cit., p. 94.

147 Kallash and Efros, Istoriia russkogo teatra, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 27.

148 According to Kelly, this film contains the 'last oblique Soviet treatment of the carnival', but she mistakenly ascribes this sequence to the skomorokhi. See Kelly, op. cit., p. 158.

149 The Book of Daniel, chapters 1-3.

150 Ibid., chapter 1, verse 4.

151 "They were called Chaldeans in memory of those servants in King Nebuchadnezzar's time who, as legend has it, started a fire in an oven wherein they intended to burn Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego." See Adam Olearius, The Travels of Olearius in Seventeenth Century Russia, translated and edited by Samuel H. Baron, Stanford, 1967, p. 241.

152 "Khaldei prishli v "Blokhu" odnovremenno i iz starinnogo russkogo "deistva", i iz ital'ianskoi improvizatsionnoi komedii" (341). See also 'Narodnyi teatr' (IV, 424).

153 See the description and illustrations of this 'cauldron' in Kallash and Efros, op. cit., pp. 27-29.

154 Zamiatin was particularly insistent about the design of this cape in his letter to Kustodiev dated 29 January 1925: '(....) posle razgovorov zdes' na meste o pevcheskom kaftane dla Levshi (IV akt), - ia vizhu, chto stikhar' ne goditsia (chtoby ne bylo uklona v "Bezbozhnik"); nuzhen tot variant, o k[otoro]m Vy govorili snachala, t. e. chto-to vrode kaftana arkhiereiskikh pevcheskich, chut'-chut' utrirovannogo.' Emphasis in the original. See 'Perepiska', op. cit., pp. 348-49.

155 "During their escapades the Chaldeans were considered pagan, and impure. It was even thought that if they should die during these days they would be damned. Therefore, on the Day of the
Three Saintly Kings, a day of great general consecration, they were all baptized anew, to cleanse them of their godless impurity and join them once again to the church.' See Olearius, *Travels*, op. cit., p. 242.

156 Po zamyslu, Khaldei v "Blokhe" dolzhny nesti vsiu igru i gde nado - veseloi vykhodkoi podzhigat’ i zelitei, i akterov.' See 'Narodnyi teatr' (IV, 429).

157 A brief account of the history of the journal is given in 'Novye, ranee neizvestnye stranitsy publitsistiki Evgeniia Zamiatina', *Knizhnoe obozrenie*, 1989, 18, pp. 8-9.

158 See Shane, op. cit., p. 63.

159 Zamiatin iz Lebediani, tambovskii, chego rusee, i stikhiiia ego slov otborno russkaia. Prozvishche: "anglichanin". Kak budto on i sam poveril, - a eto tozhe ochen’ russkoe. Vneshne bylo "prilichno" i do Anglii, gde on prozhit vsego poltora goda, i nikakoe eto ne angliiskoe, a prosto pod inzhenerskuiu grebenku, a razoidetsia - smotrite: lebedianskii molodets s proborom! ' See Remizov, Stoiat´...,' op. cit., p. 118.

160 'Pis’mo Stalinu' (IV, 313-14).

161 See Zamiatin’s letter to Iarmolinskii dated 11 March 1925, cited in Shane, op. cit., p. 43.

162 This quotation comes from an interview given to A. Werth in the Manchester Guardian in 1932. Cited in Shane, op. cit., p. 43.

163 See the IMLI catalogue of Zamiatin’s archive, fond 47, opis’ 1, ed. khr. 130-164.

164 See 'Vstrechi s B. M. Kustodievym (IV, 167).

165 See 'Vstrechi s Kustodievym', in Evgenii Zamiatin, *Izbrannoe*, op. cit., pp. 333-43 [pp. 333-343]. The reason that this source has been cited here in preference to Neimanis is that a typographical error in the latter seems to have omitted a key half-sentence in the above fragment.

166 'Stat’ ia ne stal pisat’, ia sdelal inache: prosto razlozhil pered soboi vsekh etikh kustodievskikh krasavits, izvozhikov, kuptsov, traktirshchikov, monakhin’ - ia smotrel na nikh tak zhe, kak kogda-to na ego kartinu na vystavke - i sama soboi napisalas’ ta povest’ ("Rus’"), kakaia voshla v knigu "Rus’". See 'Vstrechi s B. M. Kustodievym (IV, 168). For information regarding the postcards
on which the designs were based, see I. Belitskii, *Rasskazy ob otkrytkakh*, Moscow, 1986, pp. 105-36.


169 See ibid., p. 49, note 6.

170 Kustodieyv's brief article, 'Kak ia rabotal nad Blokhoi', was published in *Blokha. Igra v 4. d. Evg. Zamiatina*, op. cit., pp. 19-20. Dikh's ecstatic reaction on opening the boxes containing the first designs is described in 'Perepiska', op. cit., p. 319. The account of Zamiatin's visits to Kustodieyv during the play's conception and realization is given in 'Vstrechi s B. M. Kustodieyvym' (IV, 173-75).

171 The story of this vehicle is mentioned in a part of Zamiatin's obituary which was not published. It is reprinted in Galushkin (pub.), 'Vstrechi s Kustodieyvym', op. cit., p. 49 (note 12).

172 'Rus' - v sushchnosti, edinstvennaia tema vsekh ego rabot, on ei ne izmenial, i ona ne izmenila emu - i ne izmenit.' See 'Vstrechi s B. M. Kustodieyvym' (IV, 177).

173 'Moi sobesednik priznalsia mne: "Ved' vot pri zhizni ia, pozhalui, ne ochen' dazhe liubil raboty Borisa Mikhailovicha. A teper', kogda on umer - vizhu, kak ego ne khvataet, i vizhu, chto ego mesto - nekomu zaniat', i tak ono ostanetsia nezaniatym nikem".' See ibid.

174 See ibid., IV, 176.

175 Zamiatin's father died in 1916 - see chapter four of the present thesis, footnote 97. Zamiatin mentions the death of his mother in a letter to his wife dated 20 December (new style) 1925: 'A mat' - lezhit ona, v netoplennom zale. I nikogda uzhe bol'she ia ee ne uvizhu - a eshe khuzhe, chto ona menia nikogda ne uvidit. Khuzhe - potomu chto ona menia liubila, konechno, v desiat' raz bol'she, chem ia ee.' See RNB, fond 292, ed. khr. 8 (p. 4).

176 See A: 1929 (I, 32).
Although the path of Zamiatin's writing career to a large extent mirrors that of Nikolai Gogol - by this, I mean that a set of provincial stories deeply rooted in the folk-religious imagination is succeeded by a series of more sophisticated, urban tales - it is difficult to discuss his brand of 'literary populism' without reference to Nikolai Leskov and the Russian literary tradition to which he belongs. According to van Baak, Leskov was the 'lone wolf' of Russian literature, a writer who, through his portrayal of offbeat and eccentric characters, his experiments in genre, and his fascination with popular language and etymology openly polemicized with the fictional worlds presented to the public in the nineteenth century by the 'aristocrats' and raznochintsy. Certainly, Zamiatin's rise to prominence coincided with the rediscovery and proper appreciation of Leskov's special talent as a writer. It can also be argued, paraphrasing van Baak, that the correspondences between the two writers went well beyond formal technique to embrace the moral structure of their respective worlds and the destinies they assigned to their fictional heroes and heroines: Leskov and Zamiatin were 'stylizers of Rus' who explored the periphery and margins of Russian provincial life and presented their manipulated and constructed world as if through the eyes of a non-conformist experimenter.

Curiously, of all the writers to whom Zamiatin owes an immediate and obvious debt, Leskov is mentioned least of all in his critical articles, lectures and correspondence. Numerous points of
reference can be found in his fiction, and several allusions, even direct quotations, have been commented upon in this thesis. Yet proof of direct and extensive knowledge of Leskov's literary output, as paradoxical as this may seem, is not greatly in evidence outside the body of the texts themselves. Reasonable assumptions may be drawn from the fact that Zamiatin was a great reader of literature from his early youth; that he mentioned Leskov's great knowledge of folklore, ecclesiastical literature and 'provincialisms' in his lecture on popular language at the Petrograd House of Arts; that he was more than willing to accept the proposal to adapt *Levsha* for the stage in 1923; that he was acquainted with the tale prior to 1917 (he describes encountering a folk fabulate based on the same armoury 'legend' while staying in the town of Epifan', Tula province, prior to the Revolution); that he chose to borrow the name of the hero of Leskov's *Zaiachii remiz* (1891-95) - Onoprii Opanasovich Peregud - for an editorial article published in his journal, *Russkii sovremennik*, in 1924; and that a draft version of the same article, although slightly different in terms of subject and scope, reveals that he planned originally to use the character of Dr. Nikolavra, also from Leskov. Such references are rare, however, and occur for the most part around the time when Zamiatin was involved with Leskov for professional reasons (due to the staging of *Blokha*). The relative paucity of information regarding his attitude towards Leskov is paralleled only by his silence on the subject of Remizov, despite the overt kinship which existed between the two writers, one to which attention was continually drawn by Zamiatin's contemporaries. The issue arises whether Zamiatin desired to conceal his debt to these writers, or
considered their influence so blindingly transparent that it would have been superfluous to mention it in public.

In my view, the latter is definitely the more likely. In his obituary, Remizov placed the 'deliberate construction' of Zamiatin's prose within an ornamental prose tradition pioneered by Gogol and re-wrought later by Andrei Belyi; yet the fascination with 'The Word' as it related to popular etymology owed more to Leskov and the 'literary populist' tradition as represented in the work of Vasilii Sleptsov, Pavel Mel'nikov-Pecherskii, Sergei Maksimov, Gleb Uspenskii and Aleksandr Ertel. Doubtless, it would be a mistake to pigeon-hole Zamiatin squarely within a 'Novelists of the Soil' tradition, despite the political affiliations of the journal Zavety, in which he was initially published. As demonstrated by his Symbolist predecessors, it was possible to borrow popular materials from the imaginative world of the narod without necessarily conforming to populist aesthetic precepts; furthermore, Zamiatin's narratorial conceit was only one among several formal devices which characterized his style of writing and tended to make it modernist, rather than neo-Populist. Nonetheless, however much the world of his rural stories is manipulated and exaggerated for comic effect, a trait which he shares with Leskov, it is one depicted with astonishing immediacy and power precisely because of its colloquial and 'populist' texture. Unlike the work of some of his predecessors, whose fictional treatment of the narod tended to be marred by literary convention (reluctance to use vulgar language and substandard grammatical forms) and their relative lack of familiarity with the world in question (this was
unfortunately true of certain Symbolists), Zamiatin's stories convey a high degree of authenticity and succeed in communicating the essence of the world which they attempt to describe. This is one inherent difference between *Uezdnoe* and, say, Belyi's *Serebrianiy golubь*. The 'voice of the provinces' projected in Zamiatin, although essentially an illusion and narratorial sleight of hand, appears genuine and realistic because of its rawness, crudity and primitive qualities.

Sologub's mistaken assumption that *Uezdnoe* had been written by Remizov under a pseudonym tells us more about his sophistication as a reader than about the quality of Zamiatin's debut. While clearly influenced by Remizov's fiction - Remizov himself recognized this fact, but protested that aspiring writers rarely emerge into the light of day 'readily formed', as if from a vacuum, without some role being played by literary tradition (he gave various examples from his own literary works) - the idiosyncratic quality of Zamiatin's talent was not a matter of dispute. Judging by the memoirs of Aaron Shteinberg, who moved in the same literary circles at around the time Zamiatin shot to prominence, he clearly stood out from the host of would-be writers bombarding Ivanov-Razumnik with manuscripts at *Zavety*, as well as those who later became associated with the trend of 'neo-realism'. Ivanov-Razumnik himself drew attention to the dynamism, vigor and spontaneity of Zamiatin's prose, and the skill with which he was able to demonstrate his observations, rather than merely narrate them, a trait he shared with Ol'ga Forsh. Yet this style was also distinguished by the unerring brilliance and precision of his metaphors, the deliberate
musicality of his instrumentation (both harmony and dissonance) and the syntactical distortions of his sentences. One of the most astute, albeit obscure, early analyses of Zamiatin's work - a comparison of his instrumentation with that of Andrei Belyi and Fedor Sologub - drew attention to the brutal violence of his syntactical inversions, modelled supposedly on colloquial speech, yet moving well beyond mere speech to effect a radical shift in the reader's perception of reality. This was Formalist ostranenie deployed as a deliberately dislocating strategy, and in this respect the raw impact of his prose differed greatly from that of Leskov and Remizov. The narratives of the former, although lively and inventive in their use of language, tend to be rambling and tortuous in terms of their plot (Leskov had little sense of artistic proportion and virtually no concept of dramatic tension); whereas Remizov's stories in the early part of his career - with the exception, perhaps, of Piataia iazva (1912) - were the products of a bookish, cultured sensibility, albeit one attuned to the poetry of the Russian language and deeply immersed in the popular folk-religious tradition. It is relatively easy to distinguish Zamiatin's Uezdnoe from, say, Remizov's Neuemnyi buben - indeed, the language of the former possessed a fresh, raw, vibrant energy which few of his contemporaries could emulate, and it was undoubtedly this quality, rather than the novelty of his themes, or the manner in which they were elaborated, which accounted for the enormous impact of his first collection. By 1918, however, the skaz-orientated phase of Zamiatin's career is more or less over: manuscripts deposited in the IMLI archives reveal that provincial works usually associated with the early twenties - Sever, Spodruchnitsa greshnykh and Nadezhnoe
mesto - were in fact written in Lebedian during the summer and autumn of 1918. Blokha stands out in this period as an experiment in skaz stylization precisely because it exists in such isolation.

When Ivanov-Razumnik remarked that Zamiatin's work blended 'realism' with 'modernism', he touched upon a subject fraught with difficulty: how exactly 'literary populism' fits into the generally accepted notion of 'modernism'. The issue is complex for a number of reasons, not least because we are bound to view the subject through Zamiatin's own eyes and those of his contemporaries, while striving nevertheless for a sense of perspective born of hindsight. Zamiatin's 'reading' of his own fiction is instructive, full of clarity and multifaceted; yet it is important not to associate the statements directed explicitly towards the synthetic works of the 1920s with the earlier, stylized experiments in skaz. It is obvious that the remarks about speed, dynamism and energy expressed in such essays as 'O sintetizme', remarks apparently provoked by the artistic imperative of capturing the way in which modern technological advances were transforming perceptions of reality, cannot readily be applied to the early prose - indeed, this would be a nonsense in view of the provincial personae who populate these stories, simple people who owe their way of life and imaginative consciousness precisely to the absence of progress and enlightenment in their daily lives (the absence of technology, for example, in this case street lighting, serves as the unifying theme of Sever). Many of Zamiatin's later observations about his art belong to a different stage in his career, a stage of literary
politics, Scythian polemics, anti-utopian manifestos, anti-Euclidean mathematics, opposition between energy and entropy, cubo-futurism and reflections on modernity. The title of Chudakova's recent essay, 'Eretik, ili matros na machте!', aptly captures this aspect of his art and philosophy during the heady days of post-October polemics, but it is all rather far removed from the stories examined in this thesis.18

Eikhenbaum tried to give an answer to this question about modernism in his essay on Leskov and literary populism. Essentially, he used the term as a means of defining the way in which Russian authors of various artistic persuasions had collected and studied materials relating to the folk-religious imagination and deployed them in their writing. He drew a sharp distinction, however, between Romantic writers, whose attitudes towards folk culture he considered 'naive' and 'enthusiastic', and the ethnographers and positivists of the late nineteenth century, who took a more 'scientific' approach; and both tendencies were again distinguished from the sceptical interest of the modernists, via Leskov, in exploiting 'low' popular genres as a form of poetic renewal of language and form.19 He argued that the key issue in a work of prose fiction was not the subject or plot of a text, but the manner in which the plot or subject was narrated; moreover, in the sort of fiction which conformed to his notion of literary populism, the manner of narration characterized by a lubok-style simplicity which, while it might vary from author to author in terms of elegance (and according to personal taste), sought to give the illusion of popular modes of expression.20 Although Eikhenbaum limited his observations to Leskov - this, after all,
was the ostensible focus of his interest in this essay - his approach is equally relevant to a wide range of artists at the turn of the century whose fascination with popular materials was motivated by a desire to move beyond outdated and tired, 'academic' procedures. These artists can be grouped variously in terms of their avant-garde allegiance: 'post-impressionism', 'neo-primitivism', 'neo-romanticism', 'neo-realism', 'cubism', 'futurism' 'expressionism', 'fauvism', 'rayonism', 'synthetism' are just a few of the terms which have been applied to their work, with many of them progressing from one movement to the other in their desire to experiment during the course of their careers. Yet a common feature linking them all is a shared interest in art forms such as the *lubok* and the icon, and primitive modes of expression, with their strong lines, exuberant, bright colour, childlike simplicity verging on naivety, and raw, vibrant, concentrated energy and expressivity.  

It is no coincidence that many of these artists are listed in Zamiatin's essay on popular theatre, 'Narodnyi teatr', which discusses the showbooth stylization of *Blokha* against the background of a general enthusiasm for popular art forms at the turn of the century.

Eikhenbaum's approach is instructive, and it is interesting to note that Zamiatin himself seemed to regard his early work in a similar light. The dynamism, ellipses and vigour of his prose at this stage in his career were less the product of technological imperative than of the desire to reflect ordinary speech in all its colour, expressivity and spontaneity. As he himself pointed out in 'O iazyke', this was a democratic artistic imperative, one which sought to expand the frontiers of the acceptable in 'high'
literature to embrace colloquial expressions, idioms, dialect, sub-standard grammar within the sphere of author-narrator statement. Russian literature had always incorporated the speech of the poor and marginalised in its depictions of material reality, but rarely had this kind of language been elevated to the level of sustained narratorial exploration (the speech of the peasant characters in Lev Tolstoi's plays, *Pervyi vinokur* [1886] and *Vlast' t'my* [1887] is a daring and enterprising exception). The radical and extreme nature of this project was immediately apparent and caused shock waves to break out among conservative critics - which may be one of the reasons why Zamiatin talked so frequently about the need to 'enrich' the language, rather than to 'soil' it, in his lecture on popular language at the House of Arts. Arm in arm with this popular lexicon went motifs, images and themes borrowed from oral literature, folk art and popular religion (apocrypha, Saints' *Lives*, popular legends etc.), as well as impressionistic snapshots of popular rituals and customs. What is astonishing about this phase in Zamiatin's literary career is the depth of his knowledge and expertise as far as the world of the *narod* is concerned. Lip service to this aspect of his work has always been paid by critics and scholars alike, yet only through extensive investigation does it become evident quite how deeply immersed he was in this world. It is sufficient to recall Maksimov's words about the ignorance surrounding the Feast of Prepolovenie to appreciate fully the extent to which his religious background had contributed to a highly perceptive understanding of folk mentality and the symbolism of certain rituals and customs.
The effect of these techniques was to lend his prose a *lubok*-style simplicity and *faux naïf* quality; and it is in this sense that comparisons can profitably be drawn with the parallel innovations in the fields of sculpture, music and painting. Zamiatin drew a comparison between his own fiction and the drawings and paintings of his friend, Boris Grigor’ev, in a style which he characterized as 'beautiful ugliness' (*krasota bezobraznogo*), the famous catchphrase of the Knave of Diamonds art exhibition in 1910.24 Equally, he exploited images in his prose fiction which also interested such neo-primitivist painters as Mikhail Larionov and Natal’ia Goncharova, a particularly illustrative example being the depiction of Baryba in terms of a 'stone woman' (*kamennaia baba*) at the beginning and end of *Uezdnoe*.25 The strong visual impact and grotesque distortions of Zamiatin's prose make comparisons with certain modern painters a natural and illuminating reflex; moreover, it is possible to chart the development of his brand of literary populism using painters and artists as useful markers along the route: the harsh, grotesque and ugly texture of *Uezdnoe*, for example, showed Zamiatin at his most neo-primitivistic (the physical depiction of his characters, with its harsh contours, shared much in common with Konenkov's peasant figures made of wood and stone); whereas the softer focus and brighter colours of *Blokha* signalled a shift towards the more idealistic, 'red-cheeked' gaiety of Boris Kustodiev. We need only compare the respective cover illustrations adorning the 1916 and 1923 editions of *Uezdnoe* by Dmitrii Mitrokhin (a student of Ivan Bilibin) and Kustodiev to see this process at work: the first highly stylized and directly evocative of the woodcut 'mermaid' figures with which peasant...
artists used to decorate their *izba*; the second no less simple, but lacking the bold exaggeration.

As with Kustodiev, it is impossible to discuss the themes of Zamiatin's work without considering his attitude towards 'Old Russia'. To state that this attitude was paradoxical and extremely ambiguous would be an understatement. After the Revolution, Zamiatin sympathetically cited Blok's concept of 'hateful love' (*nenavidiashchaia liubov*') as an expression of his own attitude towards his native country. And in his lecture on the psychology of art at the House of Arts he claimed to have been 'in love' with the main characters of *Uezdnoe*, however 'ugly' and 'repulsive' they were. Such remarks suggest that Zamiatin satirized that which he profoundly loved - or, in his own words, that the 'whip' of satire, irony and sarcasm was brandished only in order to raise human beings up off their knees. Zamiatin's fascination with the world of the ordinary folk, with its rituals, customs, ceremonies, imaginative strivings and ideals is evident at every turn of the page. Simultaneously, however, the reader is treated to a graphic and often disturbing account of the backwardness, vulgarity, stupidity, bestiality, mendacity, disorder, lawlessness, injustice, inertia, corruption, dirt and boredom which characterize this world. These two impulses coexist in Zamiatin's fiction, yet the degree to which they are accorded balance in his work has not often been properly appreciated. This is largely because so much of the cleverness, skill and subtlety with which Zamiatin evokes the world of the *narod* lies concealed beneath the surface of the text - it requires a specialist knowledge which many readers do not possess,
especially since they are separated from the text by several generations, not to mention the massive explosion of Revolution which, to a certain extent, swept much this world away once and for all (although helpful, it is not sufficient merely to consult Dal’). Here, however, there also lurks the danger of exaggeration and distortion. For the scholar investigating the popular nuances in his art, every tiny discovery becomes a cause for celebration and elation which can often, unless rigorously checked, overshadow the very depressing and tragic implications of his fiction. The impact is somewhat akin to Barthes' *plaisir du texte*: it is a sort of linguistic strip-tease in which Zamiatin's rough-jewelled brilliance is teasingly revealed, layer by layer, to the meticulous researcher. This is the 'erotic' pleasure which underlies the remarks of Shteinberg and Koni about Zamiatin's 'quarrying' in the 'deep mines' of the Russian language - it is the pleasure of encountering exotic words, and thus we can hardly be surprised that they express their pleasure in the language of adornment and finery.\(^{31}\) It would not be an exaggeration to talk of Zamiatin's sculpting of words, since so many of them are used for their textural and visual, as well as musical impact. Yet the pleasure to be derived from this process should not detract from a sober weighing of the overall impact of his tales, with all their mordant irony and grim reflection on life's absurdities and the futile struggle against death.

Irreconcilable and conflicting elements lie at the very heart of Zamiatin's writing. He was an agnostic who encouraged his students to study the ecclesiastical literature of antiquity; a modernist who delved deep into the ancient strata of the
language in order to give his prose muscularity, durability and exoticism; and an intellectual who succeeded in evoking the life and language of the folk with tremendous resonance, and yet at the same time with an almost patrician sense of irony and humour. Like his tremendous love of Russian 'old singing' (apparently, on the day he died, Zamiatin had been listening to Musorgskii's Boris Godunov), his attitude towards Russia's ancient cultural heritage was a paradoxical one: he admired its 'historical form' while rejecting its 'truth'. Likewise, his attitude towards the human embodiment of this culture, the inhabitants of the bleak provinces themselves, was equally ambiguous. They were the brutalized victims of the system to which they were subject (the metamorphosis from innocent victim to corrupt policeman in Uezdnoe is symptomatic); they were also sly, unreliable, ignorant, duplicitous, thieving, lazy, superstitious (their Orthodoxy only skin-deep), and capable of acts of great brutality and tenderness at one and the same time. Unlike his populist predecessors, Zamiatin refused to idealize the peasant; and it was precisely the mercilessness of his gaze which caused Marxist critics after the Revolution, wrongly in my view, to accuse him of reactionary sympathies. Such attacks, which were politically motivated rather than honestly felt, confused moral imperative with cynicism and a sense of superiority, and it can only be hoped that now that scholars are free to engage with Zamiatin's work in an independent way this aspect of his fiction will receive due recognition.
For a brief discussion of the relative influence of Gogol and Leskov on Zamiatin's prose, especially the importance of the early Dikan'kastories, see Graffy, 'Zamyatin's "Friendship" with Gogol', op. cit., p. 143.

See van Baak, 'Leskov and Zamyatin: Stylizers of Russia', op. cit., p. 313.

Jbid.

'Mnogo odinochestva, mnogo knig, (....)' . See Zamiatin's reminiscences of his youth in A: 1929 (I, 26).

'O iazyke', op. cit., p. 83.

'Moia rabota nad "Blokhoi"', op. cit., pp. 570-71.

See 'Peregudam' (IV, 332-37).

See E. Zamiatin, 'O literature i iskusstve', pub. A. Tiurin, Novyi zhurnal , 178, 1990, pp. 150-65 [150-51]. This piece is untitled, but the last paragraph suggests that it was originally conceived as an editorial piece for Russkii sovremennik , rather in the manner of 'Peregudam'.

Remizov, 'Stoiat....', op. cit., p. 117.

Remizov, for example, mentions Sleptsov and Mel'nikov-Pecherskii as having been particularly influential on his own work. See ibid., pp. 118-19.

Remizov claimed in his obituary that when Uezdnoe had first been published, Fedor Sologub inquired whether he, Remizov, had not been the author writing under a new pseudonym. The relevant quotation has already been cited in the introductory chapter to the present thesis (see footnote 44). Remizov drew attention to the fact that this seemed to be a generally held opinion in critical circles, and that Zamiatin was typical of many aspiring writers attempting to adopt a similar style of writing: 'Odin izvestnyi redaktor, blizhaishii k Gor'komu, a vposledstvii
blizkii i s Zamiatynym, rasskazyval mne, kak on brosal v korzinu rukopisi, v kotorykh slovesno byl otzvuk ot moego: "takikh rukopisei Gor' komu posylalos' nemalo" (...) See ibid., p. 118.

12'Ochen' mne bylo eto stranno slyshat': tochno ia iz vozdukh protknulsia na belyi svet russkoi literatury... moi "Neuemnyi buben" idet ot Leskova i Gogolia, moia "Posolon'" ot Pecherskogo, a po pesennosti i poezii "prozy" mne tak blizok Sleptsov; i te neschastnye, obrechennye na vybros, - vsia ikh vina tol'ko v tom, chto oni v kruge russkogo lada i "prirodnoi" rechi.' See ibid., p. 118-19.

13Zamiatin's 'discovery' by Ivanov-Razumnik, or to be more accurate, by his wife, Varvara Nikolaevna, who was entrusted by her husband with the task of reading manuscripts sent to him at Zavety by unknown writers, is recounted in some detail by Shteinberg: 'V odin prekrasnyi vecher Varvara Nikolaevna skazala: "Posmotri, tut, kazhetsia, chto-to interesnoe. Strannyi kakoi-to iazyk, no ochen' svoeobraznyi". Eto byl odin iz rasskazov Zamiatina, kotoriy vposledstvii voshel v pervyi ego sbornik "Uezdnoe". (....) Razumnik Vasil'evich srazu prishel v neobyknovennyi sostav ot rasskaza Zamiatina: "Da ved' eto sovershennyi samorodok! Vot tebe i ural'skii inzhener! A vdrug novyi..." On dazhe ne reshilsia skazat', kto "novyi". Tak Evgenii Ivanovich Zamiatin nachal svoiu literaturnuui deiatel'nost'. On byl priniat v "Zavety". I srazu zhe za nim ustanovilas' reputatsiia pisatel'ia, pishushchego svoim, zamiatinskim iazykom.' See Shteinberg, Druz'ia moikh rannikh let, op. cit., p. 148.

14Cited in Shane, op. cit., p. 124.

15'Zamiatin tsel'iu sebe stavil dat' takoi iazyk svoemu rasskazu, chtoby kartina i oshchushchenie ot vzgliada na etu kartinu vpolne sootvetstvovali zamyslu (....).' See D. Balika, V laboratorii poeta (F. Sologub, A. Belyi, E. Zamiatin), Belebei, 1917, p. 16.

16Spodruchnitsa greshnykh was first published in 1922 in book two of the literary almanach, Peresvet. However, it was originally entitled Pirog and written during June-July 1918 - see the Zamiatin archive in IMLI, fond 47, opis' 1, ed. khr., 53, 54, 55 & 56. According to the editors of the Neimanis edition of Zamiatin's collected works, Nadezhnoe mesto was first published.
in 1924 in the journal Zhizn iskusstva under the title V Zadonsk na bogomol´e (IV, 50); but it was first written on 23 July 1918 under the title Vdova Polipapova ("Nadezhnoe mesto") - see the IMLI archive, fond 47, opis´ 1, ed. khr. 57. Sever was first published in the 1922 Zamiatin collection entitled Ostrovitiane: Povesti i rasskazy, but was written originally at some time towards the end of 1918 and the beginning of 1919 - see ibid., ed. khr. 63 (entitled Fonar´), 64, 65 (dated 18 October [new style] 1918), 66, 67 & 68.

17See 'O sintetizme' (IV, 282-90).

19See Eikhenbaum, 'Leskov i literaturnoe narodnichestvo', op. cit., p. 15.
20Eikhenbaum quotes from Leskov himself: "'Istorii, podobnye moei, po chastiam vстreichaiutsia vo mnozhestve sovremennykh romanov - i ia, mozet byт', v znachenii interesa novizny, ne rasskazhu nichego takogo novogo, chto by ne znal ili dazhe ne videl chitatel´, no ia budu vse eto rasskazyvat´ ne tak, kak rasskazyvaetsia v romanakh - i eto, mne kazhetsia, mozet sostavit´ nekotoryi interes i dazhe, pozhalui, novost´ i dazhe nazidanie".' See ibid., p. 13.

21'Young artists, doubting the validity of symbolism, embarked on a search for more vigorous, more immediate sources of inspiration, and these they found in primitive art forms including naive painting and children's drawings, but specifically the Russian domestic arts and crafts. In the bright colors, emphatic lines, intense stylization and general optimism of Russian peasant art, the new generation of artists found a barbaric energy and an artistic energy which the standard professional easel painting of their time lacked so patently.' See J. Bowlt, 'Neo-primitivism and Russian Painting', in his Russian Art 1875-1975: A Collection of Essays, New York, 1976, pp. 94-111 [p. 95].
22'Narodnyi teatr' (IV, 425-26).

23'Prazdnik Prepoloveniia prinadlezhit k chislu tekh, istinnoe znachenie kotorykh pochti sovershенно neponsiatno dla naroda. Dazhe liudi obrazovannogo kruga, na vopros: chto takoe

24Zamiatin lived in the same block of flats as Grigor'ev from 1917 to 1919 in Petrograd, and frequently had occasion to see him at work: 'I vot za eti tri goda, za etu odnu noch' ia uvidel, chto iz nyneshnikh russkikh khudozhnikov net ni odnogo, iskusstvo kotorogo bylo by mne blizhe, sozvuchnee, chem iskusstvo Borisa Grigor'eva. I uznal, chto v ego liniakh, formakh, priemakh ego glaza - takie zhe, kak moi, i raznitsa tol'ko v tom, chto u nego karandash i kist', u menia - slovo. (...) Krasota bezobraznogo. Dissonansy. Skriabin priuchil nashe ukho k nonakkordam i septimam. Tak i tut.' These remarks were made in a brief article, 'Boris Grigor'ev', which remained unpublished during Zamiatin's own lifetime - see E. Zamiatin, 'O literature i iskusstve', op. cit., pp. 166-67 [p. 166]. The exhibition with which the phrase *krasota bezobraznogo* was associated - the first Knave of Diamonds Exhibition - took place between December 1910 and January 1911.

25*kamennaia baba* was the name given to the stone statues of antiquity discovered by archaeologists near pagan burial mounds in Southern Russia in the nineteenth century and now believed to have originated during the Iron Age. These statues are approximately six-feet high and depict human forms of both the male and female gender: a photograph of such a female stone statue standing outside the Hermitage in St. Petersburg is reproduced in Anthony Parton, *Mikhail Larionov and the Russian Avant-garde*, London, 1993, p. 100. Natal'ia Goncharova was known to have been fascinated by these weathered, round figures, and transformed them into angular, quasi-cubists monsters in her paintings *The God of Fertility, Stone Woman* (Still Life) and *Pillars of Salt* (Cubist Method) - see ibid. The similarity in shape and design between her stone figures and the physical description of the main hero of *Uezdnoe*, Baryba, is striking. Initially, his face is described as an 'upturned iron': 'Ne zria prozvali ego utiugom rebiatu-ueurzniki. Tiazhkie zheleznye cheliusti, shirochenyiyi, chetyrekhugol'nyi rot i uzen'kii lob: kak est' utiug, nosikom kverkhu' (I, 33); later, at the end of the tale,
he has been transformed into a huge 'stone woman': 'Pokachivaias', ogromnyi, chetyrehugol'nyi, davashchii, on vstal i, gromykhaia, zadvigalsa k prikazchikam. Budto-by ne chelovek shel, a staraiia voskresshaia kurgannaia baba, nelepaia russkaia kamennaia baba' (I, 86).

28 'Aleksandr Blok' (IV, 146).
30 'Knut eshche malo otsenen kak orudie chelovecheskogo progressa. Deistvitel'nee knuta ia ne znaiu sredstva, chtoby podniat' cheloveka s chetverenek, chtoby chelovek perestal stoiat' na koleniakh pered chem i pered kem by to ni bylo.' See 'F. Sologub' (IV, 153).
31 Both describe Zamiatin's language metaphorically in terms of jewels. Shteinberg describes Zamiatin's words as 'precious metals' and 'diamonds' which are mined from the 'deep layers' of the language; whereas Koni refers to 'precious metals' and 'stones'. See Shteinberg, op. cit., pp. 148 & 158.
32 Remizov mentions this circumstance in his obituary in connection with their shared love of Russian 'old singing' - see 'Stoiat' ....', op. cit., p. 118.
I. Evgenii Zamiatin

A: Primary Materials

(i) Archival Materials:

1. Institut mirovoi literaturey imeni M. Gor´kogo Akademii nauk SSSR (IMLI), Moscow, fond 47, 625 edinit khraneniia (1903-32).

2. Russkaia natsional´naia biblioteka (RNB), St. Petersburg, fond 292, 25 edinit khraneniia (1892-1931). The letters contained in this archive are divided into six sections: ed. khr. no. 4 [1906-1910 (12 letters, 32 pp.)]; ed. khr. no. 5 [1910-1914 (20 letters, 40 pp.)]; ed. khr. 6 [1916 (15 letters, 25 pp.)]; ed. khr. 7 [1918-23 (25 letters, 45 pp.)]; ed. khr. 8 [1923-26 (15 letters, 22 pp.)]; and ed. khr. 9 [1926-31 (20 letters, 40 pp.)]. References contain the date of the letter, the item number in the catalogue, and a page reference.

I was permitted access to the catalogue for the Zamiatin materials held in IMLI, including correspondence and critical articles, but not permitted to inspect the manuscripts themselves. Where necessary, I have indicated errors in dating on the part of the archivists. In the case of the materials preserved in the Russian National Library, I was permitted to examine Zamiatin's
correspondence with his wife, Liudmila Nikolaevna (maiden name Usova).

(ii) Books: -

- *Bol'shim deham skazki*, Berlin, Petersburg, Moscow, 1922, reprinted edition, no place of publication or date given.
- *Blokha: Igra v 4 d.*, Leningrad, 1926.
- *Sobranie sochinenii. Tom pervyi* ("Uezdnoe"), Moscow, 1929.
- *Sobranie sochinenii. Tom vtoroi* ("Na kulichkakh"), Moscow, 1929.
- *Sobranie sochinenii. Tom tretii* ("Ostrovitiane"), Moscow, 1929.
- *Sobranie sochinenii. Tom chetvertyi* ("Sever"), Moscow, 1929.

435


- *Sochineniia*, compiled by T. V. Gromova and M. O. Chudakova, with an article by M. O. Chudakova and notes by E. Barabanov, Moscow, 1988.


(iii) Journal Publications of Fiction and Essays by Zamiatin:


- 'Tekhnika khudozhestvennoi prozy', ibid., 6, pp. 79-107.

(iv) Correspondence: -


- 'Pis´ma E. I. Zamiatina A. M. Remizovu', publ. V. V. Buznik, Russkaia literatura, 1992, 1, pp. 176-80.


(v) Autobiographies: -

- 'Avtobiografia' (A:1922) - see Neimanis edition (III, 13 14)
- 'Avtobiografiia' (A:1924) - see Neimanis edition (IV, 11-12)
- 'Avtobiografiia' (A:1929) - see Neimanis edition (I, 25-32)

B: Secondary Materials on Zamiatin


Annenkov, Ju.,

Balika, D.,

Brown, E. J.,

Chudakova, M.,
de Haard, E.,

Dikii, A.,

Edwards, T. R. N.,

Eikhenbaum, B.,

Franz., N.,

Galushkin, A.,

Goldt, R.,

Graffy, J.,
Gregg, R. A.,

Hobzová, D.,

Ivanov-Razumnik, R.,

Izmailov, A.,
- 'Temy i paradoksyi', *Birzhevye vedomosti*, 6 March 1916.

Kastorskii, S.,

Keenan, W.,

Keldysh, V.,
Lampl, H.,

Leech-Anspach, G.,

Levinson, A.,
- 'Dzhentel men; zametki o proze E. I. Zamiatina', Poslednie novosti, March 1923.

Lundberg, E.,
- 'Literaturnyi dnevnik', Sovremennik, 1915, 1.

Mikhailov O.,

Niqueux, M.

Poliakova, L. V.,
Primochkina, N.,
- 'M. Gor'kii i E. Zamiatin (k istorii literaturnykh
vzaimoootnoshenii)', Russkaia literatura , 1987, 4, pp. 148-
60.

Remizov, A.,
- 'Stoiat’ - negasimuiu svechu pamiati Evgeniia Ivanovicha
Zamiatina', first published in 1937, reprinted in Nashe

Shaitanov, I.,
- 'O dvukh imenakh i ob odnom desiatiletii', Literaturnoe

Shane, A. M.,
- The Life and Works of Evgenij Zamjatin , Berkeley and Los
Angeles, 1968.

Shklovskii, V.,
- 'Potolok Evgeniia Zamiatina', in his Piat’ chelovek
znakomykh , Tiflis, 1927, pp. 44-67.

Shteinberg, A.,

van Baak, J.,
- 'Visions of the North: Remarks on Russian Literary
World-Pictures', in Dutch Contributions to the Tenth
International Congress of Slavists , Sofia 14-22 September
1988. Literature , edited by A. van Holk, Amsterdam, 1988,
pp. 19-43.
- 'Leskov and Zamyatin: Stylizers of Russia', in Literary
Tradition and Practice in Russian Culture. Papers from an
International Conference on the Occasion of the Seventieth
Birthday of Yury Mikhailovich Lotman. 2-6 July 1992 Keele
II. Cultural Background

Afanas`ev, A.,

Alekseev, M.,

Anderson, G.K.,

Barthes, Roland,
Belitskii, I. A.,

Belkin, A. A.,

Bernshtam, T.,
- *Russkaia narodnaia kul’tura pom’or’ia v XIX - nachale XX v.*, Leningrad, 1983.

*Bibleiskaia entsiklopediia*,

*Bibliographie des oeuvres de Alexis Remizov*,

Bilibin, I. I.,

Blok, Aleksandr,

*Bol’shoi vsem iyi nastol’nyi atlas Marks*, St. Petersburg, 1905.

Bowlt, J.,

Bruce Lincoln, W.,

Carr, E. H.,

Cherepanova, O.,

Chicherov, V.,

Clark, K. W. and M. W.,

Costello, D. P. and Foote, I. P. (eds.),

Cruden, A.,

Dal’, V.,

Danilevich, L.,

*Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*,

Douglas Clayton, J.

Dushechkina, E.,
Eikhenbaum, B.,

Entsiklopedicheskii slovar' izd. Brokgauza i Efrona,
- forty two volumes, and four supplementary volumes, St. Petersburg, 1890-1907.

Ermolev, A.,
- Narodnaia sel'skokhoziaisstvennaia mudrost' v poslovitsakh, pogovorkakh i primetakh. I. Vsenarodnyi mesiatseslov, St. Petersburg, 1901.

Faminsyn, A. S.,
- Skomorokhi na Russi, St. Petersburg, 1889.

Fedotov, G.,

Florovskii, G.,
- Puti russkogo bogosloviia, Paris, 1937.

Forsh, O.,
- Sobranie sochinenii, eight volumes, Moscow-Leningrad, 1962-64.

Frierson, Cathy F.,

Fuhrmann, Joseph T.,
Goddard Elliott, A.,

Gogol', N.V.,
- *Sobranie sochinenii*, seven volumes, Moscow, 1976-79.

Grigor'ev, A (comp. and ed.),
- *Arkhangel'skie byliny i istoricheskie pesni*, Moscow, 1904.

Grimmelshausen, Johann Jacob,

Gromyko, M.,

Heard Hamilton, G.,

Heffernan, Thomas J.,

Henessey Olsen, A.,

Hoffmann, E. T. A.,
Howe, I.,

Ivanits, L.,

Jakobson, R.,

Jensen, P.,

*Judith*

Kalinskii, I. P.,

Kallasha, V. & Efros, N. (eds),
- *Istoriia russkogo teatra*, vol. 1, Moscow, 1914.

Kalugin, V. I. (ed.),

Kelly, C.,

Kern, G., and Collins, C (eds.),

*Kievo-Pecherskii Paterik*

Kliuev, N.,
- *Sochineniia*, two volumes, Munich, 1969.

Komarovich, V.,

Kondakov, N. P.,
- *Ikonografiiia Bogomateri*, two volumes, St. Petersburg, 1915.

Korolenko, V. G.,
- *Sobranie sochinenii*, ten volumes, Moscow, 1953-56.

*Kratkie svedeniia o prazdnikakh Pravoslavnoi tserkvi i skazaniia o zhiti osobenno chtimykh sviatikh*,

Kunina, I.,

Kustodiev, B. M.,

Lebedeva, V.,
- *Boris Mikhailovich Kustodiev* (Russian version), Moscow, 1966.

'Legenda o grade Kitezhe' (original version plus modern translation),

Leifert, A.,

Leskov, N. S.,
- *Sobranie sochinenii*, eleven volumes, Moscow, 1956-58.

Levin, E.,

Maksimov, S.,

Matossian, M.,
McLean, H.,

Meletinskii, E. (ed.),

Mel'gunov, S.P.,

Mel'nikov-Pecherskii, P.,

Murav-Lavigne, H.,

Mushchenko, E., Skobelev, V., and Kroichik, L.,

Nederlander, M.,

Nichols, R. L.,

Nivat, G.,
Olearius, A.,

Opul’skii, A.,

Paléologue, M.

Parton, A.

*Penguin Dictionary of Saints*,

Poliakov, S.,

*Polnyi pravoslavnyi bogoslovskii entsiklopedicheskii slovar’*,
- two volumes, Moscow, 1992.

Pomerantseva, E.,

*Povest’ vremennykh let*,

Prishvin, M.,
- *Sobranie sochinenii*, six volumes, Moscow 1956-57.

Propp, V.,

Pushkin, A. S.,


Remizov, A.,

- *Dokuka i balagur'e*, St. Petersburg, 1914.
- *Tulumbas*, first published in *Zapiski mechtatelei*, 1, 1919.
- *Tsar'Dodon*, illustrations by L. Bakst, Petrograd, 1921.

Rosenthal, C.,


Rouart, Marie-France,


Rovinskii, D.,

- *Russkie narodnye kartinki*, five volumes plus atlas of pictures, St. Petersburg, 1881.

Rybakov, B.,

Saltykov-Shchedrin, M. E.,

Shklovskii, V.,

Slonim, M.,

Slovar’ russkogo iazyka,
- Akademiia nauk SSSR, second edition, four volumes, Moscow, 1981-84.

Sobolevskii, A.,

Sologub, F.,

Solov’ev, V.,
- *Sobranie sochinenii*, nine volumes, St. Petersburg, 1901-07.

Sreznevskii, I. I.,
- *Materialy dlia slovaria drevnerusskogo iazyka*, three volumes, St. Petersburg, 1903.

Sytova, A.,
The Fall of the Romanoffs,

The Golden Legend of Jacobus de Voragine,

Thompson, B.,

Thompson, S.,

Tokarev, S. A. (editor-in-chief)
- Mify naroda mira, two volumes, Moscow, 1980-82.

Tolstoi, A. K.,
- Sobranie sochinenii, ten volumes, Moscow, 1958-61.

Tretii etnograficheskii sbornik,
- in a series entitled Trudy Kostromskogo nauchnogo obshchestva po izucheniiu mestnogo kraia, vyp. XXIX, no place of publication given, 1923.

Trofimov, A.,
- Sviatye zheny Rusi, Moscow, 1993.

Turbin, V.,
Turgenev, I. S.,

Uspenskii, G.,
- *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, six volumes, second edition, St. Petersburg, 1908.

Velikie minei-chet'i, sobrannye vserossiiskim mitropolitom Makariem,
- eight volumes, St. Petersburg, 1865-1915.

Vernadsky, G., and Karpovich, M.,

Vinogradov, V.,

Voloshin, M.,

Warner, E.,

Walker White, E.,

Ward, B.,

Worobec, Christine D.,
Zabylin, M.,

Zelenin, D.K.,

Ziolkowski, M.,

Zguta, R.,

*Zhitiia Sviatykh na russkom iazyke izlozhennye po rukovodstvu Chet’ikh-minei sv. Dimitriia Rostovskogo s dopolneniiami iz Prologa*,
- twelve volumes, Moscow, 1903-1911.