

# Reflection on turgenev's fathers and sons

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Reflection on Turgenev's Fathers and Sons What distinguishes Bazarov from other personae of the "children" generation: Arkady Kirsanov, Anna Odintsova, Sitnikov, Eudoxia Kukshin? In the novel "Fathers and Sons," the author shows the difference between two generations of life in the Russian history. This book was written to counter the budding cultural schism in Russia from 1830s to 40s. In addition, it is sensitive and perceptive in the sense that it balances the eternal matters of science and religion, progressivism and conservatism, and liberalism and conservatism. The sons in Turgenev's book are portrayed as yearning for closeness and intimacy while fighting with the need of differentiation and independence thus establishing an image of real life so poignant that the reader can reflect upon his own life. During this time, there were cultural differences between the liberals and the growing nihilist uprising in the Russian society. The character of Bazarov is very different from others in that via him, the spirit of revolutionary is vividly presented. Through his thinking as an educated young man, Bazarov is focused on changing the society unlike his brothers who are insensitive to things happening around them. Bazarov and Arkady are characters in the novel that possess different traits. The two characters oppose each other in a more nihilistic manner which is expressed through their emotions. Bazarov shows his love for Madame Odintsova and Fenichka and this shows deep emotion through these characters which brings the need for care and concern to other people. Bazarov said, "May I introduce myself?" he began, making a polite bow. "I'm a friend of Arkady Nikolayevich and a harmless person" (Turgenev 69). The other character portrays a picture of carelessness and lack of respect to humanity showing how indiscipline and disrespect has taken root in Russian society. Fathers

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and sons open up young Arkady together with his friend Bazarov on their way home. Bazarov decided to visit Arcady's father called Nikolai Petrovitch Kirsanov. Nikolai lives in a declining estate together with Nikolai's brother, Paul and his young mistress. Nikolai was a well-established aristocrat in the society. This visitation took place during the liberation of the serfs in 1860. According to Bazarov, this liberation was very different in that he willing to destroy the structure of the existing society and begin afresh in life because the society lacked morals. Through his arguments, he foreshadowed Russia's bloody future that had to occur in order to get liberation. In addition, in order to distinguish how Bazarov was different from others such as Arcady, it is vital to look at the tenets that guided these characters. According to Barazov, aristocracy, progress, liberalism and principles are foreign and useless words in the minds of many Russians. He asserts that for the thinkers beyond logic, humanity virtues are very vital human aspects in developing society. In his statement, he asks the masses the need for logic and if it really matters in their lives. Barazov's sentiments were highly countered by Pavel Petrovich who thought of his speech as being quite insulting depicting the difference in ideals of these characters as presented in the novel. Bazarov told Pavel, " you respect yourself and you sit with folded hands; what sort of benefit is that to the bien public? If you didn't respect yourself, you'd do just the same. Pavel Petrovich turned pale. " That is quite another question. There is absolutely no need for me to explain to you now why I sit here with folded hands, as you are pleased to express yourself. I wish only to tell you that aristocracy--is a principle, and that only depraved or stupid people can live in our time without principles. I said as much to Arcady the day after he came home, and I repeat it to you now

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(Turgenev 89). He blamed Barazov for not recognizing and acknowledging the set principles and rules that ought to guide society. Bazarov who was a strong nihilist argues with Pavel a prototypical liberal of the 1840s generation concerning the nature of nihilism and its usefulness to the Russian society. This scene presented the struggle between fathers and their sons. 2. Someone has written of Ivan Turgenev's *Fathers and Children* that "Turgenev held a true mirror up to Russia and was bewildered to hear so many voices berating both him and the mirror for what they saw therein" This quote implies that Turgenev's novel *fathers and sons* symbolized generational gap that took place among Russians which Turgenev decided to talk about in his work. For instance, Bazarov never gave up his belief that the old society and its institutions were ill and need to be completely destroyed. In addition, it shows the cultural difference that was witnessed between the liberals in the 1830s and 1840s. In addition, it also shows the nihilist movement that occurred during the same period which aimed to change the Russian society. Through this book, the old aristocratic regime in the Russian society was questioned and proved ineffective and worth of transformation. When Bazarov fell in love and was rejected, it depicted how inequality had taken place in the Russian society and needed to be destroyed. The Russian writer foreshadowed the Russian history in respect to the modern society

Works Cited Edmonds, Rosemary and Turgenev Ivan. *Fathers and Sons* (Penguin Classics). New York: Penguin classics, 1965. Print. Turgenev, Ivan. *Fathers and Sons*. New York: Penguin Classics, 1965. Print.