



# **The Artamonov Business**

*Maxim Gorky*

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## **The Artamonov Business** Maxim Gorky

Maxim Gorky, pseudonym of Alexei Maksimovich Peshkov, Soviet novelist, playwright & essayist, who was a founder of social realism. Although known principally as a writer, he was closely associated with the tumultuous revolutionary period of his own country. Of all Gorky's novels, *The Artamonov Business* ('Decadence' in the USA edition) is the most impressive & dramatic. Here in concentrated form is the tragic failure of Russia's middle classes in the decades before the Revolution, seen in the small town microcosm of a family of textile manufacturers.

## **The Artamonov Business Details**

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Author : Maxim Gorky

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# From Reader Review The Artamonov Business for online ebook

## Mustafa kemalin k?zçesi says

?mparator II. Aleksandr 1861 y?l?nda serfli?i kald?r?r ve özgürle?en köylüler ?ehirde i? kurmaya ba?lar. Artamonovlar da onlardan biridir.

Ancak bulunduklar? yerdeki insanlar artamonovlardan rahats?zd?rlar. ?lya artamanov belediye ba?kan?n?n evine gider ve ba?kandan k?z?n? o?luna (pyotr'a) vermesini ister. Belediye ba?kan? ister istemez k?z?n? (natalya) vermek zorunda kal?r.

Belediye ba?kan? bir zaman sonra ölür. Dü?ün vefat?n üzerinden bir zaman sonra olur. Fabrika büyümeye devam etmektedir.

?lya artamanov dünürü ulya baymakova ile yasak ili?ki ya?ar.

Bir süre sonra ilya artamanov da ölür. ?? pyotr'a ve aleksey'e kal?r. Nikita ise manast?ra gider.

Olaylar geli?ir. Rusya ad?m ad?m k?z?l devrime do?ru gitmektedir.

Kitapta beni en çok kap?c? tihon etkiledi. Kitap sanki yar?m kalm?? gibi geldi bana. Genç devrimci ilya artamanov'a ne oldu merak ediyorum.

2015 y?l?nda yazar?n mujik adl? kitab?n? okumu?tum o da bende yar?m kalm??l?k hissini uyand?rm??t?.

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## Deanne says

The Artamonovs are a difficult family to like, dysfunctional in many ways they don't seem to like each other. The Artamonov Business or Decadence as this version is called follows the family across three generations. The majority of the central characters are male with the women appearing as only minor characters.

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## Megan Baxter says

I have a real weak spot for Russian literature, for some reason. I have enjoyed almost all of it I have read, although I greatly preferred Anna Karenina to War and Peace. Last year, though, I made a run at The Brothers Karamazov, and although I had thoroughly enjoyed both Crime and Punishment and The Idiot, I found I got bogged down and never got through it. I mean, I was three or four hundred pages in, and very little had happened! Some day, I may try to go back, but for the moment, I'm content to let that one lie.

Note: The rest of this review has been withheld due to the changes in Goodreads policy and enforcement. You can read why I came to this decision here.

In the meantime, you can read the entire review at Smorgasbook

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## Rüveyda says

?lya Artamonov, prensin yan?nda çal??an bir u?ak iken, y?llarca sadakatle çal??mas?n?n sonucunda keten fabrikas? kurabilecek parayla yan?ndan ayr?ld?. ??ini çocuklar?na emanet etmi?ti. Kamburuyla ya?amak

zorunda olan o?lu Nikita, i?lerle u?ra?mak yerine -tanr? inanc?ndan yoksun olmas?na ra?men- manast?ra s???nm??t?. Di?er çocuklar? i?i yürütmeye çal??salar da kaybettikleri ?ey özgürlükleri olmu?tu. Çar devrilmi?, i?çiler kazanm??t?.

"Nikita, ama belle?i ona hüznü bir atasözünü f?s?ld?yordu: 'Sevmeden ya?amak ac?d?r, seversen de iki kat ac?d?r.'"

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## Charisma says

At the beginning I really liked it, but after the father was gone, everything seemed to have "fallen to pieces." It became more tedious to me, the story revolved mostly around the oldest son, and I was hoping to hear more about the rest of the family. Overall, not a bad book, and I would like to read more of Gorky.

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## Kristel says

A story of Russia told through the family saga of the Artamonov covers the time period of Russia industrial revolution to it's conclusion in the Bolshevik Revolution. The Artamonov are the new class of Russian merchants born out of the end of the serfdom declared by Tsar Alexander. Artamonov comes to the sleepy village of Dromov to build a Linen Factory. Ilia Artamonov barges into the town, interrupting life as it was formerly lived by the citizens. The story takes us through to the third generation and as may be the norm, the business deteriorates as we get further from it's origins.

Quotes:

"There are no human beings at all, only workers, except for beggars and the gentry. We all live merely to work; work overshadows everybody." page 95.

"he (Peter) saw with astonishment that his son by some miracle had become his match, either by rising to a grown-up in authority, or else by reducing a grown-up to his own level." page 129

Rating 3.57

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## Pip says

I enjoyed this family saga set in Russia from the time of the Emancipation of the serfs until the Bolshevik Revolution. It was a tumultuous time in Russia's history but Gorky set his story in a village far from the centres of revolt and concentrated on how the societal upheavals affected a small community. The Artamatov family's business was to weave flax into linen. The first in line was a freed serf who had the confidence to start a factory from scratch and persuade the locals to grow flax for his enterprise. He was a strong character who taunted people but also understood how to deal with them and the local peasants followed him happily. The son who took over the factory did so out of a sense of duty rather than passion for the factory which he fancied as a beast. He would much rather have been a farmer and he lost touch with the workers. The resentment of the peasants begins to simmer as the third generation takes over. One son becomes an intellectual and joins the socialists in the city, one is still a Tsarist but is impatient with his father's resistance to change and the third is sympathetic to the rise of the workers. The retainer, Tikhov Vialov, who remains a loyal yardman throughout his life despite knowing all the family's dirty secrets cannot forgive Nikita, the hunchback who retires to a monastery because he is unrequited in love, for destroying his faith in religion but

not replacing it with anything in which he can believe. Against the backdrop of the Japanese War and then the First World War, the old structure of society is broken down as mistrust is all pervasive.

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### Trounin says

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(c) Trounin

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### Dree says

After the peasants are freed, Artamanov Sr moves to a new town and starts a linen factory. He brings his wife and sons. The townspeople are not sure they trust him or like him, or that they want a factory. But he quickly marries his oldest son to the daughter of a local widow, and is then part of town life.

As he ages his sons grow, have children, and Sr dies. Then the grandkids become involved in the business and have kids of their own.

This is, of course, all going on in the late 1800s/early 1900s. The Artamonovs, though previously owned themselves, are now merchants and thus not trustworthy. And their lives are somewhat decadent, with lots of food and alcohol, traveling to Moscow and back, and marrying daughters off to other wealthy merchants so they leave the town. The factory runs itself, they just take, while the townspeople pour their lives into working for them. Some of the Artamonovs worry about the peasant uprisings and talk, but most just go about their business.

Not a long book, but I would it slow going.

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### Bam says

Gorky's book, originally published as *The Artamonov Business*, is about the decline (decadence) of the Russian middle class between the years 1863 and 1918--or in other words, between the serf's emancipation and the Bolshevik revolution. It is a character study depicting the Artamonov family over three generations, as their family business at first thrives and then declines as the family itself declines and the social revolution gains impetus.

Peter, the eldest son observes, "The business is growing," while the family's groundskeeper (and self-styled philosopher) says, "A business is like mould in a cellar. It grows by its own force."

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## Derek says

I'd describe the tone of this novel as a stark yet calm brutality. Gorky chronicles the short-lived reign of a newly liberated family of household serfs as provincial bourgeois and the social and moral decline they undergo over three generations. It is punctuated by three murders: the first, an undepicted murder by Artamonov Sr. of a factory hand, the second when Peter Artamonov brutally murders his son's childhood friend with delusions of protecting him from bad influence, and the third an abortive murder borne of paranoia that is completed in reverse when Yakov Artamonov is killed randomly on a train fleeing Dromov. The bulk of the novel revolves around the absolute moral decay of Peter Artomonov, the eldest son, as he drifts into alcoholism, infidelity and misanthropy over the course of the factory amassing wealth. Gorky traps the reader so thoroughly in this twisted perspective that the Bolshevik revolution and the seizing of the family property comes at the end not as a triumph as it is historically but a relief. A requiem for the pitiable Russian bourgeoisie, never to become fit to rule on their own

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## Monur72 says

Gorki'nin en iyi eserlerinden biri. 350 sayfaya sığdırılmış üç neslin hikayesi. Genel anlamda insan ruhunun meseleleri ele alınıyor. Ayrıca endüstrinin, makineleşmenin insan ruhunu bozuma uğrattığı tezi de savunulmakta. Kitapta tek rahatsız edici unsur, hikmetli gibi görünen içi boş lafların insanın başından aşkın kova kova dökülmesi. Tüm rus külliyatında, özellikle köylüler ve alt sınıfların konu alan rus edebi eserlerinde sık sık görülen bir olaydır bu. Çok derin manalarla dolu sanılan boş laflar, deyimler falan karakterler tarafından sık sık kullanılır. Bunun dışında herhangi bir düzlemde özdeşlik kurulamayacak bazı kişilikler de barındırıyor. Bunu söylememin sebebi şu: iyi ya da doğru olduğu satır aralarında ima edilen bir karakteri insan bir türlü kabul edemiyor. Herkes erişilebilir ve doğrusu ile ele alınsa başından üstünde yeri var ama nedense garip bir şekilde yazar tarafından onları şu ya da bu olduğu empoze ediliyormuş gibi görünüyor. Bu da karakter yaratımında güvensizliğe nede oluyor. Yine de adam büyük yazar. Kesinlikle okunmalı.

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## Kerem says

Ne yazık ki, Artamonov'ların ötesinde, bebekliklerini, çocukluklarını bildiğin bu insanlar, büyüdüklerine, yaşılandıkları ve ölümlerine şahit olmak gibi bir duygusal derinlik. Gorki'nin karakter yaratmaktaki dehası cabası

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## Tony says

THE ARTAMONOV BUSINESS. (1925; this ed. 1955). Maxim Gorky. \*\*\*.

Frankly, I hadn't heard of this novel by Gorky before I found this edition in an early Folio Society edition from 1955 in a translation by Alec Brown with woodcuts by Peter Pendrey. I've read a couple of other things by Gorky (1868-1936), but, in general, he tends to be too didactic for my taste. This novel, which carried forward his reputation for social realism, displayed what he felt was the failure of the freeing of the serfs by

the Tsars without any preparation and/or training. The story is set in Russia during the period 1862 – 1918. It is set in the town of Dronov. At the onset, we meet four men who are marching into this town. The oldest is Ilia Artamonov, the father, is an arrogant and strong man. Accompanying him are his three sons, Peter, the oldest, Nikita, the hunchback, and Alexey, an adopted son. They have come from one of larger cities to make their fortune by building and operating a linen plant in this town. They have been freed by their master and provided with working capital. They are very arrogant and look down upon the occupants of the town, who have mainly subsisted by farming. They ultimately convince the villagers to plant sufficient flax and to come work in their factory. They also make their way into the village hierarchy and ultimately take over the reins of the village. This then becomes a family saga novel. Being a non-Russian, there is a lot that I missed in this novel, but it was still interesting to read. If you are interested in Gorky's viewpoint on the freeing of the serfs and their chances of success, this novel will certainly provide it.

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### **Nicholas Beck says**

Gorky's attempt to write a family saga spanning approximately 50 years from the emancipation of the serfs and the resulting rise of middle class capitalism which leads to the Communist revolution. The Artamonovs slowly lose interest in retaining control of their clothing factory with the advent of the 3rd generation. Gorky's theorises that capitalist ambition and energy become diluted in a family enterprise by the time the grandchildren come of age to take the reins. Loosely based on his reading of Henry Ford's memoirs and the Vanderbilt family history, he creates a distinctly Russian epic with characters doomed from the start. They're all mostly unlikeable and somewhat thinly sketched as Gorky is mainly determined to chart the historic inevitability of their decline. This is Social Realism after all. His descriptions of the Russian landscape are sublime and an absolute highlight of this novel which while not wholly successful to my mind picks up pace in the second half as the families doom is sealed.

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