There is a normative point-of-view in Soviet literary scholarship which says that, by the 1830's, when The Captain's Daughter was conceived and written, Pushkin had transcended the limitations which Romanticism earlier had imposed upon him as a writer, and which Decembrist ideology had imposed upon him as a thinker. According to this view, by the time Pushkin completed Eugene Onegin in late 1830, he had become a realist in both literary and philosophical respects. This attitude was ably enunciated in 1957 by Georgii Gukovskii, who wrote that:

Pushkin... went beyond the Romantics, he rejected the subjectivity and illusoriness of Romanticism. But he acknowledged Romanticism to be a natural, essential, and positive stage in the development of Russian literature for a particular moment, for the end of the teens and the beginning of the 1820's, just as he acknowledged Decembrism to be the most positive phenomenon in the development of Russian society in those same years, and the Decembrists—the only people who at that moment of Russian history were performing, in the final analysis, a truly national deed. This also was an authentically historical view of things, which saw both sides of a question, which subordinated personal strivings and expectations to an understanding of the iron law of history, which saw the reasons for the downfall of Decembrism, and, all the same, vindicated Decembrism. This was a triumph for historicism, both in social and in artistic thought, this was also a triumph for realism, which understood and expressed man, society, reality, and which explained them historically.¹

In agreement with this thesis about Pushkin's ultimately realistic style and Weltanschauung, the prose fiction work of 1832-36 entitled The Captain's Daughter is classified as a realistic historical novel.² Basically, this means that The Captain's Daughter is perceived as a historically plausible tale, narrated in a transparent if not totally objective manner by a fictional persona, Petr Grinev, who presents a historically accurate picture of the dress, speech, manners, and spirit of the middle 1770's in

¹ G. A. Gukovskii, Pushkin i problemy realisticheskogo stila (Moscow, 1957), pp. 277-278.
Russia, and whose fate unravels in connection with certain actual events (the Yaitsk insurrection, the siege of Orenburg, the sack of Kazan'), which were of crucial importance in the outcome of the Pugachev uprising. In the words of one Soviet Pushkinist, "In *The Captain's Daughter* it is difficult to find a single artifice which would not have a concrete foundation in historical reality, which was not an echo of some real, historical fact." And, furthermore, *The Captain's Daughter* is "realistic" in the sense that it portrays conflict not in terms of a clash between unique individuals, bent on pursuing their own will, but in terms of broader social antagonisms and even class struggle. In the words of Gukovskii, "The concrete examination of the class forces of revolutionary movements... constituted the methodological essence of Pushkin's approach to the problem... in *The Captain's Daughter*." And, finally, according to this interpretation, Pushkin's narrative is "realistic" in the sense that the fictional world described therein is not dominated or distorted by the overweening presence of a titanic hero, which, it is assumed, would be typical for a romantic tale on this theme. Gukovskii writes:

Pugachev is a powerful personality. However, not only does he make an uprising, but the uprising makes him, forming out of him a hero, a military chief, a ruler. And the character of him as a personality and as the hero of a novel expresses the character of the people, who have risen up against the landed gentry, rather than vice versa, as it used to be for the romantics, in whose works the people humbly follow the personal predilections, ideas, or even whims of the hero. To a still greater degree, Pushkin's other insurrectionists too—Khlopusha, Beloborodov—are, as it were, images of the insurrection of the people.

Against the background of this prevailing view of *The Captain's Daughter* as a realistic work in the senses outlined above, one catches occasional glimpses of a kind of minority report, in which a more qualified position is taken. For example, in a perceptive article of 1962, the Soviet structuralist critic Iurii Lotman argues that, while Pushkin's novel is built symmetrically on the principle of opposing class interests nevertheless its compositional balance point is the highly extraordinary friendship which develops between Emel'ian Pugachev and Petr Grinev—a relationship made possible only because each of them, in turn, was able to step outside the circle of his own natural class interests in order to extend a humane gesture and a helping hand to the other. In Lotman's words: "The complexity of Pushkin's thought is disclosed through a peculiar structure, which forces the heroes, while moving beyond the world of their characteristic class conceptions, to broaden their own moral horizons." Lotman does not evade the question of where Pushkin stood in relation to his hero Grinev. He writes: "Grinev is not a mouthpiece for Pushkin's ideas. He is a Russian

5. Ibid., p. 377.