

Review

Reviewed Work(s): Ognennaia pamiat': Vospominaniia ob Aleksee Remizove by N. V. Reznikova

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Source: *The Slavic and East European Journal*, Vol. 27, No. 3 (Autumn, 1983), pp. 384-385

Published by: American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/307868>

Accessed: 22-04-2017 07:44 UTC

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railing against bribery and injustice, of which he too is guilty, is mostly hypocrisy. The message of *The Case* is perceived as the celebration of man's spiritual greatness in physical defeat. In Fortune's reading, Lida's vision conquers through Muromskij's death: total honesty in answer to corruption, even in the face of personal harm. Comparison should have been made with Tolstoj's "neprotivlenie zlu nasiliem." The conclusion suggests that the end of Muromskij's personal struggle through death will trigger the larger combat between good and evil.

The theme of the stronger predator triumphing over good and evil alike is realized in *Chapter Five, The Death of Tarelkin*. Fortune notes the homogeneity of the characters in dark qualities. He views *Tarelkin* as a travesty on the main plot of *The Case* and a continuation as well as a variant on its subplot. An extended metaphor emerges in the play: "as the vampire sucks the blood of his victims even to the point of death, so the predatory man extorts money from his victims to the point of ruin and death." Reading between the lines through his method of analogy, Fortune conjectures that Lida was subjected to a degrading medical examination by the same type of inept doctor who examines Tarelkin. He compares Tarelkin with Gogol's Akakij Akakievič, a small figure involved in everyday matters and suffering, which end in tragicomedy. Where Akakij was innocuous, Tarelkin is a bad little man. Tarelkin mirrors Krečinskij in cleverness and as a negative hero.

The examination traces the thickening of amoral darkness through the trilogy. Yet a question arises: is the triumph of evil and corrupt officials only a reflection of Suxovo-Kobylin's personal experiences, as proposed by Fortune, or is it rooted in the artistic tradition of the time, albeit persecuted by the censorship?

Two short chapters conclude the study—*Chapter Six, The Unity of the Trilogy* and *Chapter Seven, Editions and Performances*. The annotated Selected Bibliography of sources is useful. This well-organized book with memorable formulations, then, provides a fine source on Suxovo-Kobylin for the history of drama and the literature of the nineteenth century.

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Н. В. Резникова. «Огненная память: Воспоминания об Алексее Ремизове». (Modern Russian Literature and Culture Studies and Texts, 4.) Berkeley, CA: Berkeley Slavic Specialties, 1980. 147 pp. (paper).

Reznikova's reminiscences of A. M. Remizov are a long-awaited and a welcome addition to the scant biographical sources on this major writer. Until recently, the main source of information has been N. Kodrjanskaja's *Aleksej Remizov* (Paris, 1957). This book includes a brief documentary sketch of the writer's life, but its main aim is to let Remizov present himself through his own statements on a range of literary topics. Among more recent publications, there is S. S. Grečiskin's "Arxiv Remizova" in *Ežegodnik rukopisnogo otdela Puškinskogo Doma na 1975 god* (Leningrad, 1977), which contains information on Remizov's exile years. The one-volume Soviet edition of Remizov's prose, *Izbrannoe* (Moscow, 1978), has a general introduction to the writer's life by Ju. Andreev. A major addition to the Remizov scholarship has been the publication of his correspondence with A. Blok in *Aleksandr Blok: Literaturnoe nasledstvo*, n. 92, v. 11 (Moscow, 1981), with an extensive introductory essay by Z. Mints.

The importance of Reznikova's book in this context is that she is able to provide unique insight into Remizov's personal and creative life. Their close friendship and later collaboration, when Reznikova became his foremost translator into French, spanned over thirty years of emigration in Berlin and Paris. Her reminiscences are vivid and intimate, conveying both a depth and an immediacy of impression, which allow the "real" Remizov to emerge. Reznikova

intersperses her narrative with quotations from letters and conversations with Remizov and his wife. She is able to shed light on their extraordinary marriage, and on the mysterious and unsettling circumstances which led to the abandonment of their daughter, left in the care of relatives in Russia.

Reznikova captures the complex personality of the writer in all its contradictions. She remembers Remizov as an affectionate man, with a ready smile, full of *élan vital*. At the same time, she writes of the more familiar Remizov, with the deep sense of the painful and tragic that often dominated his life and writing. There are many delightful descriptions of Remizov's love for play, especially of his creation of the mock-literary society, Obezvelvolpal, a symbol of free-thinking and independence from the norm. Reznikova elaborates on Remizov's own description of the society in *Axru* (Berlin, 1923).

Valuable comments on Remizov's manner of writing are scattered through the book. He was uncomfortable with the traditional novel form, preferring a free, lyrical genre. "ili forma bolee svobodnaja, vne ramok, skoree povest' ot svoego lica, ili ot lica kogo-nibud' drugogo" (51). Remizov enjoyed writing from the point of view of a female narrator. He felt that the expression of a woman's soul was close to him. Remizov developed a composite genre in the 1920's, in which "a story from daily reality is intertwined with another reality, that of thought and feeling, and with literary reminiscences" (55). Herself a student of painting, Reznikova gives detailed descriptions of how Remizov worked on his pen drawings and collages, which he called "konstrukcii." He was able to sell albums of his art for a much needed source of income. Drawing was very much a part of Remizov's creative process, and he would often begin to draw when thinking of a new writing project.

As a participant in the cultural events of the émigré community, Reznikova evokes the lively atmosphere of the literary gatherings in Berlin, in 1922–23, in which Remizov often participated. Later, in France, Remizov did not live within the narrow confines of the émigré community, but kept in close touch with the French cultural life. Prominent French writers were among his frequent visitors and admirers of his art and writing. French translations of his work began to appear in the 1930's. After the hardship of the war years, Remizov settled into a life devoted to reading and writing. Reznikova's husband, along with some friends, established a printing press, Oplešnik, with the sole aim of publishing his works. Reznikova was a regular visitor during these years of Remizov's life, especially as she was working on the French translation of *Podstrižennymi glazami* (*Les Yeux Tendus*). Her account of Remizov's relationship with the Parisian literary establishment, particularly with the editors of the prestigious *Nouvelle Revue Française*, is extremely interesting and opens possibilities for further research. *Ognennaja pamjat'* is an invaluable contribution to the study of Remizov.

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L. Michael O'Toole. *Structure, Style, and Interpretation in the Russian Short Story*. New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1982. viii, 272, \$25.00 (cloth).

L. M. O'Toole, now Professor of Communications Studies at Murdoch University in West Australia and long a figure in the British Neo-Formalist Circle, presents us with a valuable book. Literary Structuralism in its seventy-year history has produced much in the way of innovative theory and rather less in the way of the systematic, comprehensive analysis of prose texts. There have been many partial analyses of literary texts, often as exemplifications of existing theory or, even more often, as bases for new theorizing. Structural analyses, some very good ones, of entire works have been done (cf. the recent collection of conference papers *The*