ISSN: 2158-7051
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INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RUSSIAN STUDIES

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ISSUE NO. 11 (2022/1)

READING BACKWARDS AN ADVANCE RETROSPECTIVE ON RUSSIAN LITERATURE, By Ayse Dietrich*, Published by OpenBook Publishers, Edited by Muireann Maguire and Timothy Langen, Year of Publishing: 2021. Subject Area: Anthology of Gogol, Dostoevsky and Tolstoy. Book Type: Russian Literature. Total Number of Pages: 290. ISBN: 9781800641198, paperback, $19.95.

This collaborative work is an anthology of writings by Gogol, Dostoevsky and Tolstoy and a retrospective analysis of their works. They focus on anticipatory plagiarism in Russian literature by using an 'advance retrospective' approach.

In the first part, there are two articles dedicated to Gogol. In the first article, Langen argues that Gogol borrowed ideas from the Irish writer Flann O'Brien and the Russian experimentalist Sigizmund Krzhizhanovsky. He discusses Gogol's *Testament*, his visual secretics that works as a kind of reading or seeing backwards, and his attempt to plagiarize his own forthcoming death.

In the second article, Vinitsky discusses Gogol's choice for his memorial painting, Raphael's *Transfiguration*, and the scene used by Alexander Ivanov in his painting *The Appearance of Christ to the People*. The incorporation of his own portrait and features within Ivanov's painting as an image of a prophetic figure are also discussed in this chapter.

In part two, there are three articles dedicated to Dostoevsky. In the third article, using the 'advance retrospective' approach, Bowden explores Dostoevsky's debt to Coetzee and to Kurt Vonnegut Jr. He examines Dostoevsky's "plagiarism" of the works of these two writers and Bakhtin and shows how Dostoevsky's prose was a forerunner to early 21st century ethical dialogism.

In the fourth article, David Gillespie and Marina Korneeva examines Dostoevsky's book, *The House of the Dead*, and, again employing the 'advance retrospective' approach, highlights its borrowings from a contemporary novel set in a Siberian prison, *Zuleikha Opens Her Eyes*, by Guzel Yakhina.

In the same vein, the fifth article by Inna Tigountsova analyzes how Dostoevsky's Underground Man

was based on a female version of this character type featured in a novel by Liudmila Petrushevskaia, *The Time: Night*.

In the third part, there are three articles dedicated to Tolstoy. The sixth article by Maguire analyzes the paradox of how Tolstoy stole the plot of *Resurrection* from British writer Hall Caine, and examines the interactions between Tolstoy and Caine, and then analyzes the reaction to Tolstoy's works by late 19th century British society as well as other bestselling, socially one-sided contemporary novels.

In the seventh article, Shankman examines proto-Levinasian ideas in Tolstoy. He reads the final sentence of *Anna Karenina* (1878) and sees it both foreshadowing the radical philosophical speculations of Emmanuel Levinas, as well as linking this novel conceptually with another of Tolstoy's works, *Resurrection.*

In the eighth and final article, Yefimenko examines Homer's *Iliad* from the perspective of its "borrowings" from Tolstoy's *War and Peace*. The parallels in plot, characterization and style between the two works are analyzed within the a larger study of Tolstoy's familiarity with ancient Greek literature.

In the *Afterword*, Eric Naiman uses the works of numerous modern writers and thinkers to support his argument that 'anticipatory plagiarism' not only provides modern readers with a new perspective on older literature, but that it could even be regarded as a new form of art.

This anthology is very specialized, speculative book aimed at researchers, academician and students who are interested in this specific topic.

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