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RUSSIAN LITERATURE AND ITS DEMONS

Edited by Pamela Davidson

Summary

Merezhkovsky's bold claim that "all Russian literature is, to a certain degree, a struggle with the temptation of demonism" is undoubtedly justified. And yet, despite its evident centrality to Russian culture, the unique and fascinating phenomenon of Russian literary demonism has so far received little critical attention. This substantial collection fills the gap. A comprehensive analytical introduction by the editor is followed by a series of fourteen essays, written by eminent scholars in their fields. The first part explores the main shaping contexts of literary demonism: the Russian Orthodox and folk tradition, the demonization of historical figures, and views of art as intrinsically demonic. The second part traces the development of a literary tradition of demonism in the works of authors ranging from Pushkin and Lermontov, Gogol and Dostoevsky, through to the poets and prose writers of modernism (including Blok, Akhmatova, Bely, Sologub, Rozanov, Zamiatin), and through to the end of the 20th century.

On the whole, the volume reads like a cohesive book ... and maintains a high standard of scholarship throughout. Investigators of Russian literary demonism in the future will surely want to consult this excellent work." · The Russian Review

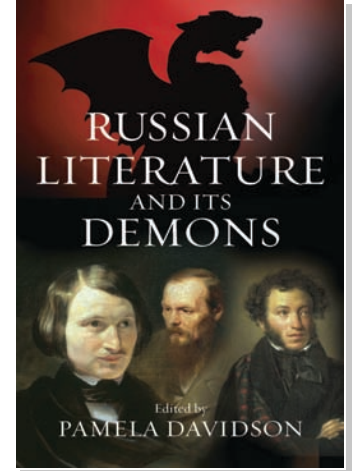
"... this collection displays a degree of mutual collaboration, as well as a consistently high quality, that surpasses that of most collections of essays ... it has much to praise and little to fault." · Slavic Review

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About the Editor

Pamela Davidson is Professor of Russian Literature at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies at University College, London.



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SLCS: Slavic Literature, Culture, & Society

Binding Paperback

PRINT ISBN 978-1-84545-757-0

E-ISBN n/a

Final Extent 608 pages, 18 ills, bibliog., index

Price \$34.95 / £21.00

Publication Date November 2010

Pub Date UK December 2010

Subject Cultural Studies
Central/Eastern Europe

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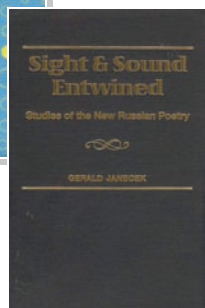
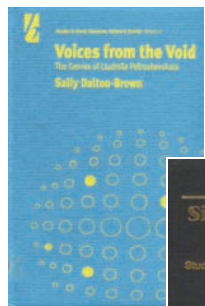
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