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Groping In The Dark: Leonid Andreev
And The Hogarth Press

Leonid Andreev's name may not mean much to the average British reader today, but there was a time when, in the course of several revolutions and a world war, and shortly after Andreev's premature death in 1919, his reputation in the British Isles was not inconsiderable (if not uncontroversial). His critical and commercial success in Russia, at some point comparable only to that of his older contemporaries Chekhov and Gorky, was promptly reported in the UK by those who could access Andreev's work in the original. Thus, a *Saturday Review* critic published a fairly accurate appreciation of the second edition of Andreev's *Tales* (*Rasskazy*), which came out in St Petersburg in 1902 and sold thousands of copies: 'There is a strongly pronounced national colouring in Andreeff's¹ tales. His heroes belong as a rule not to the rather cosmopolitan intellectual class, but to the half-uncultured mass which preserves the pure national type with all its peculiarities. Russian priests — so very unlike in their ways to the Protestant or the Catholic clergymen — merchants who so oddly combine debauchery with sudden penitence, officials with their very Russian capacity of understanding the meanness and degrading flatness of their life, yet unable to throw off what they know to be ugly, and doomed to die as undignified a death as their life has been grey, useless and lacking all inner sense — such are the people we meet with in the book; and if the author now and then represents highly intellectual characters, they also are such as are to be met with only in Russia, students absorbed by philosophic speculations, utterly incapable of enjoying life in an easy healthy way, as young men do in other countries, dreamy, unhappy creatures who begin to meditate much too early, which makes them unfit for life and action'.²

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¹ The old-fashioned discrepancy in the English transliteration of Russian names, whose spelling often varied dramatically from one publication to another, has been preserved in the relevant quotes.

² Anon, 'Tales by Leonidas Andreeff, 2nd edition, edited by "Znanie", S. Petersburg, 1902, 80 cop', *The Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science and Art* <hereafter referred to as *The Saturday Review*>, 19 July 1902, p. 86.

This and other accounts³ aroused the curiosity of translation enthusiasts, readers and publishers sufficiently for English translations of Andreev⁴ to start appearing, both in book form⁵ and in periodicals.⁶ Yet, despite the early hope that, 'notwithstanding the national stamp of the life and people Andreeff is talking of, his tales are likely to please the foreign reader',⁷ no consensus emerged on what to make of him and his impact was rather random. To the traditionalists, he appeared to be too modernist, while to the modernists he must have looked too traditional, and his ostensible inability to fall into a specific, easily comprehensible category was ascribed to his (indefinable) Russianness. Moreover, by 1914, Andreev was seen as 'the greatest exponent of the abnormal and horrible in life <...> a true child of the morbid disease that <had> ravaged intellectual Russia, and to the state of mind created by that disease a large proportion of his success <was believed to be> due'.⁸ Although Stephen Graham hastened to claim that 'the English do not care for <Andreev, as> his psychology of hysteria and delirium does not appeal to the British temperament',⁹ the evidence on whether all these undisputed characteristic features of Andreev's manner¹⁰ drew in or repelled the British audience is inconclusive. On the one hand, there was an opinion that "'morbid" Rus-

³ See, for instance, Valery Briusov's appraisals of the state of modern Russian literature in *The Athenaeum*, with sections on Andreev in the issues of 20 July 1901, 5 July 1902, 4 July 1903, 3 September 1904, 14 October 1905 and 29 September 1906.

⁴ Owing to space constraints, the present article does not discuss Andreev's reception in the USA. For those interested, Ruth Rischin's entry on Andreev in Olive Classe (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Literary Translation into English* (London and Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2000, vol. 1, pp. 50–54) can be recommended as a useful introduction to the subject. However, we occasionally refer to Andreev's American translations and quote the opinions of American (and other non-British) critics and scholars in our piece, insofar as they contribute to the specifically British discourse on Andreev.

⁵ See, for example, *The Red Laugh: Fragments of a Discovered Manuscript* (transl. by Alexandra Linden; T. Fisher Unwin, 1905), *The Seven That Were Hanged* (the translator's name is not given; A. C. Fifield, 1909) and *Judas Iscariot, forming with Eleazar (Lazarus) and Ben Tobit, a Biblical Trilogy* (transl. by William Henry Lowe; F Griffiths, 1910).

⁶ E. g. 'Fallen Angels' in *The English Review* (January 1914, pp. 181–85; transl. by S. Hoffmann); 'Valia' in *The Englishwoman* (July 1914, pp. 83–97; transl. by Jean d'Auvergne <Robert Bruce Lockhart>); and 'Was He Mad?' in *The Strand Magazine* (January 1915, pp. 40–50; the translator's name is not given). Richard Davies's bibliography of Andreev's translations into English will be published in the second issue of *Leonid Andreev: Materialy i issledovaniia*, to appear in Moscow in 2011.

⁷ Anon, 'Tales by Leonidas Andreeff, 2nd edition, edited by "Znanie", S. Petersburg, 1902, 80 cop', *The Saturday Review*, 19 July 1902, p. 86.

⁸ Jean d'Auvergne <Robert Bruce Lockhart>, 'Russian Literature since Chekhov', *The Russian Review* (Liverpool), May 1914, p. 150.

⁹ <Stephen Graham>, 'Modern Russian Fiction', *The Times Literary Supplement*, 23 April 1914, p. 193.

sian writers are not like “morbid” writers of other countries. Had an Englishman written a story like Andreev’s *The Abyss* (which deals with a cooperative rape in a wood), it would probably have been vulgar and disgusting and have given the impression that he was merely wallowing for effect. Andreev shocks and makes one go cold; but one feels that he is quite as distressed as the reader’.¹¹

On the other, it was felt that, ‘to English readers, <...> <Andreev was> always likely to remain unsympathetic and repugnant, for, even though we conceded that his intentions were essentially honest and high-minded, the depth of the pessimism which forms his most congenial atmosphere would be too much for most of us’.¹²

Not everyone would agree, though, on how genuine Andreev’s pessimism was. Harold Williams, for example, asserted that Andreev’s ‘tendency to rhetorical exaggeration and to <...> pessimism <...> was largely, though not wholly, a pose’.¹³ Even Andreev’s literary influences were open to dispute. Thus, it was noted by some that Andreev has ‘Edgar Poe’s impressive art of storytelling, of shaking the reader’s nerves, of causing a sort of horror by unfolding step by step some inner tragedy and but dimly suggesting the facts to which the tragedy is due’.¹⁴ Others contested that Andreev was ‘really not in the least like Poe. Poe’s horrors

¹⁰ Explained by a sympathetic journalist as follows: ‘At one time Andreieff was a newspaper reporter in the law-courts; and there is good reason to believe that it is that period of his career, during which he was afforded special opportunities of studying the seamy side of life, that ought to furnish us with the key to his foible of dwelling on ‘exclusive’ themes — themes which do not appear in the least far-fetched or ‘unnatural’ to those who do not ‘invent life’, but take it as it is. Another peculiarity of Andreieff’s writings is his partiality for describing the workings of the mind of the mentally unbalanced. In all probability the following fact may not be altogether without its influence in this relation. The young Russian <Andreev was thirty-four when this article came out. — RD, AR> is of a very emotional temperament and liable to attacks of nervous depression and melancholy, which, on more than one occasion, necessitated his placing himself under special treatment for the cure of acute nervous trouble. There can be no doubt that his personal experiences played a part in those of his stories which give us a presentment of the psychology of certain of his mentally unbalanced characters’ (Simeon Linden, ‘Leonidas Andreieff’, *The Independent Review*, February 1906, pp. 216–17).

¹¹ Solomon Eagle, ‘Current Literature: Books in General’, *The New Statesman*, 21 November 1914, p. 175. An anonymous member of The Anglo-Russian Literary Society, however, found *The Abyss* ‘offensive and revolting, even for this *decadent* author’ (*Proceedings of the Anglo-Russian Literary Society*, no. 55, 1909, p. 68).

¹² Anon, ‘The Plays of Andreyeff’, *The Spectator*, 15 May 1915, p. 689.

¹³ Harold Whitmore Williams, *Russia of the Russians*, London: Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons, 1914, p. 194.

¹⁴ Anon, ‘Tales by Leonidas Andreeff, 2nd edition, edited by “Znanie”, S. Petersburg, 1902, 80 cop’, *The Saturday Review*, 19 July 1902, p. 86.

are nearly all unreal fantasies <...> Andreev is a realist <...> There is almost something scientific in his collection of incurables'.¹⁵

A parallel between Andreev and Chekhov did not prove particularly helpful either. Serge Persky, Andreev's translator into French, believed that Andreev 'takes a place immediately next to Tchekoff <...> Andreyev is <...> his spiritual son. But he is a sickly son, who carries the melancholy element to its farthest limit'.¹⁶ For his part, upon reading Andreev's stories in Persky's translation (published by *Le Monde Illustré* in 1908), Arnold Bennett commented: 'the best of the book is second-rate, vitiated by diffuseness, imitativeness, and the usual sentimentality. Neither Andreev nor Gorky will ever seriously count. Neither of them comes within ten leagues of the late Anton Tchekhoff'.¹⁷

It is difficult to avoid the impression that owing to the dearth of expertise on things Russian in general, and on Andreev in particular, British critics tended to come to their conclusions too soon, forming their view of Andreev not on the basis of his entire body of work (which would not be available to them, unless they were fluent in Russian and had a constant supply of recent Russian books) but on the odd (usually faulty) translation that happened to come their way, and on their personal tastes.¹⁸ In this context, it is hardly surprising that some critics felt it was a 'gain to have a translation of another of Leonid Andreeff's works',¹⁹ while others insisted that 'the doings of this undesirable alien may well be left in the chaste obscurity of his native tongue'.²⁰

The situation was additionally exacerbated by the fact that in the British press, translations were (and often still are) examined in terms of their quality (i.e. readability and reliability) only in exceptional cases, and even when this happened, reviewers (who were rarely qualified to pass a

¹⁵ William Lyon Phelps, *Essays on Russian Novelists*, New York: Macmillan, 1911, p. 269.

¹⁶ Serge Persky, *Contemporary Russian Novelists* / Transl. from the French by Frederick Eisemann, London: Frank Palmer, 1914, p. 202.

¹⁷ Arnold Bennett, *Books and Persons, Being Comments on a Past Epoch, 1908–1911*, London: Chatto&Windus, 1917, pp. 224–25.

¹⁸ An unsigned observation that Andreev 'is like a tourist shipwrecked with his Kodak upon a desert island, and driven, from sheer despair, to taking endless snapshots of the barren sands and threatening rocks which surround him' (Anon, 'A Russian Pessimist', *The Spectator*, 22 Oct 1910, p. 653), represents an unusual insight into Andreev's mindset, specially interesting because of Andreev's private fascination with photography (see his *Photographs by a Russian Writer: An Undiscovered Portrait of Pre-revolutionary Russia* / Ed. and introduced by Richard Davies, London: Thames and Hudson, 1989).

¹⁹ Rothay Reynolds in *The New Statesman* of 27 March 1915, welcoming C. J. Hogarth's translation of Andreev's play *The Life of Man*.

²⁰ Percy Paul Selver in *The New Age* of 6 November 1913. We are grateful to Mark Gamsa for providing certain details with regard to the early British perception of Andreev.

judgement on a translation from Russian anyway) seldom if ever gave evidence to support their judgements, complimentary or otherwise. An anonymous evaluation of Herman Bernstein's translation of Andreev's play *Anathema* (New York: Macmillan, 1910) in *The Manchester Guardian* of 28 November 1910 is quite typical in this respect: 'We should suppose <the emphasis is ours. — RD, AR> that Mr Bernstein's translation is a very good one; its modulations suggest imaginative power in the original'.²¹ More than a decade later, Owen Barfield's opinion of Gregory Zilboorg's translation of Andreev's play *He Who Gets Slapped* (London: Brentano's, 1922) was built on equally shaky ground: 'To one who is ignorant of Russian <the emphasis is ours. — RD, AR> Mr Gregory Zilboorg's translation appears to be excellent. His use of English idiom is generous and correct, but not so overdone as to make one feel that the characters are English men and women; which is fortunate, since they neither act nor think like English people'.²²

If we count collections of short stories as single entries, over thirty-five translations of Andreev's fiction and drama were published in the UK between 1905 and 1925. This appears to be a reasonably high number. Alas, numbers alone do not always tell us a full story. Several titles — such as 'The Marseillaise',²³ 'Laughter'²⁴ and *The Life of Man*²⁵ — were translated more than once, which testifies to the absence of coordination among publishers and translators, rather than to the popularity of the works themselves. If there ever was a comparative discussion of different translations of the same piece, it did not appear too illuminating. For example, the unsigned review of two translations of *The Life of Man* in *The Athenaeum* of 1 May 1915 read: 'Mr Hogarth's translation of *The Life of*

²¹ By contrast, Bernstein's translation of another play by Andreev, *The Sorrows of Belgium* (New York: Macmillan, 1915), was summarily condemned: 'We have made our quotations from <...> the "authorized translation" by Mr Herman Bernstein; but we hope that some other translator will hasten to give us a new version that shall be, if not good English, at least good American. Mr Bernstein is neither; and his Introduction <...> does little to elucidate such of Andreev's beauties as his translation has obscured' (<Harold H. Child>, 'A Russian Play on Belgium', *The Times Literary Supplement*, 19 Aug 1915, p. 276).

²² *The London Mercury*, July 1923, p. 328.

²³ E. g. in a collection called *Hours Spent in Prison* (transl. and ed. by Marya Galinska; Simpkins&Marshall, 1909), which also included works by Gorky and Korolenko; in *Silence and Other Stories* (transl. by William Henry Lowe; F. Griffiths, 1910); and in *Everyman* of 5 February 1915 (transl. by Jean E. H. Findlay).

²⁴ E. g. in *T P's Magazine*, December 1910 (transl. by W. H. Lowe); and in *The English Review*, June 1921 (transl. by Elena Vishnevskaya).

²⁵ As a separate edition (Allen and Unwin, 1915; transl. by C. J. Hogarth) and as part of Andreev's *Plays* (Duckworth, 1915; transl. by Clarence L. Meader and Fred Newton Scott), which also included *The Black Maskers* and *The Sabine Women*.

Man follows the original closely. Messrs Meader and Scott are more free, but are accurate'. An inquisitive contemporary reader setting out to become acquainted with the most important publications by Andreev in the best available English translations would probably have felt confused by the discovery that the choice of Andreev's texts for translation often seemed accidental, that the translations themselves were frequently made and commented upon by people who lacked the required skills and/or background knowledge — and would have probably given up for lack of guidance.

In contrast to the translations of, say, Gogol, Turgenev, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky and Chekhov, who had already been established as great authors by the late 19th century (their key works were systematically translated by one individual, Constance Garnett, who can be said to have almost monopolised the Russian niche of the British book market back then), any meaningful discussion of the success or failure of Andreev's translations in book form in the UK in the first quarter of the 20th century is hardly possible without knowing how qualified his many translators were, why a particular text by Andreev was selected, why the publishers became interested and how many copies of the book were sold — and such an information is not at all easy to come by. A case in point is a translation of the short story 'T'ma' (The Dark), by Leonard Arthur Magnus and Karl Walter, brought out by Leonard and Virginia Woolf's publishing house Hogarth Press, on 11 January 1923 in Richmond.

'T'ma' came out in 1907, almost simultaneously in Berlin and St Petersburg, in a separate edition by the Ladyzhnikov publishing house (in Russian) and in the third Shipovnik collection respectively.²⁶ It possesses many of the trademark characteristics of Andreev's provocatively naturalistic approach to the hot issues of the day, which made him so well-known in Russia and beyond. 'T'ma' is a novella loosely based on a real-life incident that happened to the Socialist-Revolutionary Pinkhas (Petr) Rutenberg (1879–1942),²⁷ who once had to spend some time in a brothel when hiding from the police. Rutenberg's *alter ego* in 'T'ma' undergoes a spiritual conversion. The protagonist decides to abandon his revolutionary activity, because, as a result of his conversations with a prostitute called Liubka, he realises that 'it is shameful to be good' (*stydno byt' khoroshim*)²⁸ — that is, to keep trying to do the impossible and make Russia better — just as 'it is shameful for those who can see to look at

²⁶ See *Literaturno-khudozhestvennye al'manakhi izdatel'stva "Shipovnik"* (St Petersburg), 3 (1907), pp 9–67.

²⁷ On Rutenberg and 'T'ma', see V. Khazan, *Pinkhas Rutenberg: Ot terrorista k sionistu*, Moscow-Jerusalem: Mosty kul'tury-Gesharim, 2008, vol. 1, pp. 260–62, 213; vol. 2, pp. 563–66.

those who are blind from birth. If we <the revolutionaries. — RD, AR> cannot make all this darkness disappear with our torches <that is, revolutionary ideals and actions>, we should extinguish them and disappear into the darkness ourselves' (*vse polezem v t'mu*),²⁹ thereby joining the miserable and helpless majority.

Rutenberg related his story to Andreev at Maxim Gorky's villa on Capri, where they met in May 1907. When 'T'ma' came out, Gorky expressed his dissatisfaction with Andreev for the liberties he had taken with Rutenberg's tale. Apparently, in Rutenberg's original version, there had been no change of heart with regard to revolutionary activity. The prostitute had merely slapped Rutenberg for inappropriate moralising, and he had apologised to her and had kissed her hand.³⁰ Gorky's reaction must have been especially bitter for one more reason. As Gorky's *Pesnia o sokole* (*A Song about a Falcon*, 1895) has it, 'he who was born to crawl cannot fly' (*rozhdennyi polzat' letat' ne mozhet*). Contrary to this adage, which became a sort of motto for some Russian revolutionaries, the protagonist in 'T'ma' comes to the conclusion that 'he who was born to fly ought to crawl' (*letat' rozhdennyi obiazan polzat'*), to use Aleksandr Amfiteatrov's ironic paraphrase of Gorky's famous line.³¹

Bolshevik literary critics, quite predictably, did not like the novella either. Anatoly Lunacharsky, for one, called it 'an angry satire on the revolutionaries <...> <representing> a conservative and petty bourgeois (*meshchanskaia*) response to the revolution, dressed up in the rags of the Lumpenproletariat'.³² Less partisan critics, while recognising the validity of Andreev's doubts over the merit of '<revolutionary> self-sacrifice' (S. Noev in the *Bessarabskaia zhizn'* newspaper of 3 January 1908), criticised the story's 'artificiality' (a *Vestnik Libavy* reviewer in the issue of 13 January 1908). The *Bakinets* newspaper of 17 December 1907 stated that 'such a sudden transformation of an ascetic revolutionary into a mere mortal is shockingly implausible'.³³ Leo Tolstoy reportedly said upon reading 'T'ma': Andreev 'has absolutely no idea where to stop' (*polnoe otsutstvie*

²⁸ L. Andreev, *T'ma*, Berlin: Bühnen- und Buchverlag russischer Autoren J. Ladyschnikov, 1907, p. 36.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 50–51.

³⁰ See M. Gor'kii, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii. Khudozhestvennye proizoedeniia v 25 tomakh*. Vol. 16. Moscow: Nauka, 1973, p. 351

³¹ See A. Amfiteatrov, *Protiv techeniia*, St Petersburg: Prosveshchenie, 1908, p. 182.

³² A. Lunacharskii, 'T'ma', *Literaturnyi raspad*, <vol. 1.> St Petersburg: Zerno, 1908, pp. 171, 174.

³³ Quoted from Vadim Chuvakov's apparatus ('Primechaniia') in L. N. Andreev, *Stranaiia chelovecheskaia zvezda...*, Moscow: Panorama, 1998, p. 503.

chuvstva mery).³⁴ As for Andreev himself, he only added to the confusion about the story's subject matter and reception by claiming in a 1908 interview that he was very upset that 'T'ma' did not turn out the way he had intended, but in a 1913 conversation, that it was the piece of his that satisfied him most.³⁵

Given that a great deal about 'T'ma's characters and plot appears to be heavily exaggerated, it is tempting to agree with N. M. Minsky's judgement that 'such a story is unlikely to have emerged from any other fiction but Russian' (*Nasha gazeta* of 16 March 1908). However, foreign translators did not exactly fall over each other in a bid to stake a claim to this particular specimen of Russian exotica, except for translations into Armenian and Bulgarian (1908), and into Estonian (1909). It took the skill and determination of two amateur translators and a small-scale publishing house to render 'T'ma' into English fifteen years after its initial appearance in the Russian original.³⁶

The translation was co-authored by Leonard Arthur Magnus (1879–1924)³⁷ and Karl Walter (1880-1965). Magnus, a UCL graduate with a degree in law (LL.B, 1901),³⁸ was the son of Sir Philip Magnus (1842–1933), also a UCL graduate, a British educationist, a Member of Parliament for the University of London in 1906-22 and a prominent member of the Anglo-Jewish community.³⁹ Magnus's mother Katie, nee Emanuel (1844–1924), was the author of books, such as *Outlines of Jewish History* (1886),

³⁴ N. N. Gusev, *Dva goda s L. N. Tolstym*, Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1973, p. 94.

³⁵ Chuvakov, op. cit., pp. 505–06.

³⁶ For comparison, the French translation, under the title *La Victoire des ténèbres*, by Serge Persky, came out in 1913, in a volume with two other translations by him of Andreev's works: Léonid Andréief, *Mémoires d'un prisonnier* (Paris: Fontemoing, 1913), pp. 137–228 ('Moi zapiski' was the title story, with 'T'ma' and 'Khristiane' following it). There had not been a German translation of the novella until 1969, when it was published under the title *Finsternis* in the GDR in 1969 as one of the works in: Leonid Andrejew, *Die sieben Gehekten: Erzählungen* (Berlin/Weimar: Aufbau-Verlag, 1969), S. 446–497; transl. by Herbert Wotte.

³⁷ He should not be confused with his namesake Maurice Magnus (1876-1920), an American expatriate writer and entrepreneur, who grew up in New York City and committed suicide on the island of Malta. By coincidence, he also translated three books by Andreev — *To the Stars*, *And It Came to Pass that the King Was Dead* and *His Excellency the Governor* — all brought out by C. W. Daniel in 1921. For more on Maurice, see Louise E. Wright, *Maurice Magnus: A Biography*, Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007.

³⁸ In 1899, Magnus achieved a second class result in his Roman Law examinations (see the unsigned note 'University Intelligence' in the *London Times* of 6 February 1899). According to his student records, in the 1897–98 academic session he was a recipient of the Fielden research scholarship, awarded either to recent graduates or those likely to graduate in the term in which the award is made.

³⁹ For his obituary, see *The Times* of 30 August 1933.

Jewish Portraits (1888) and *First Makers of England* (1901), and a contributor to the *Westminster Gazette*, the *National Review*, the *Spectator* and other influential periodicals. Magnus's older brother Laurie (1872–1933), also a writer, was a director of the publishing firm George Routledge and Sons from 1902.⁴⁰ Curiously (but perhaps predictably), most books and translations by Leonard Arthur (9 out of the total of 15) were published either by Routledge or by Routledge's imprint, Kegan Paul (Routledge had managed the Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co. publishers since 1911).

Magnus's student records for 1903 reveal that he was also a student at UCL's Faculty of Arts and obtained top grades (As) in Greek, Latin and French. After his university studies, he was employed in some capacity at the British Museum. It is not clear where and under what circumstances he learned Russian,⁴¹ but his command of the language was sufficient to produce not only the annotated translations of *Russian Folk-Tales* (Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co., 1915)⁴² and *The Tale of the Armament of Igor* (Oxford University Press, 1915), as well as a study of *The Heroic Ballads of Russia* (Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co., 1921),⁴³ but also *A Concise*

⁴⁰ For his obituary, see *The Times* of 29 April 1933.

⁴¹ Before World War One, Russian had been taught in London at King's College (by Nicholas Orloff), at the City of London College (by S. G. Stafford), at the Gouin School of Modern Languages (by Mark Sieff) and at the Berlitz Language School — not to mention the possibility of private arrangements. In his article 'The Literary Remains of Early Russian', circulated at the meeting of the Philological Society in September 1913 and published in Part I of the *Transactions of the Philological Society, 1911–1914*, Magnus (a member of the Philological Society in 1904–13) stated: 'Russian is a very easy language to acquire; its very wealth of inflexion makes the learning of it more a matter of rule. <...> It is to be hoped that students may be attracted to this untravelled region of research and literary exploitation' (p. 109). Magnus's interest in things Russian was already evident in 1905, when, in a letter to the editor of the *Saturday Review*, he declared that the Anglo-Russian Literary Society was not fit for its purpose and should be reformed (see Leonard A. Magnus, 'Russia and England', *The Saturday Review*, 1 July 1905, p. 18).

⁴² In his review of *Russian Folk-Tales* in *The Times Literary Supplement* of 9 December 1915, Stephen Graham wrote: 'The English is good, though the translator makes a number of mistakes and has altogether failed to get the atmosphere of the original Russian work. In Russian these tales are told in colloquial and idiomatic peasant Russian. They are playfully and curiously told. But in their English guise they are very cold and matter of fact'. The book was also reviewed in *The Athenaeum* of 4 December, *The Scotsman* of 13 December and in *The Manchester Guardian* of 21 December 1915.

⁴³ For the reviews of Magnus's other Russia-related books, see, for instance, *The Scotsman* of 11 November 1915 (*The Tale of the Armament of Igor*) and *The Times Literary Supplement* of 20 October 1921 (*The Heroic Ballads of Russia*). Prince Mirsky was quite dismissive of the *Ballads*: '<Magnus> goes out of his way to say the most impossible things about everything he touches. <...> The book may be interesting to two kinds of readers: to those who are well at home in Russian folklore and could take it as an amusing, if greatly overdone, joke and to those who would study that branch of psychology <...> which deals with the aberrations of human inventiveness' (*The London Mercury*, June 1923, p. 217). L. A. Magnus also published a

Grammar of the Russian Language (J. Murray, 1916).⁴⁴ During World War I, Magnus was employed by MI7, where his job was to scour the foreign press for anything that might have been useful to the Allies. Magnus's books *Roumania's Cause and Ideals* (Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co., 1917), on Roumania's role in the War, and *Pros and Cons in the Great War: A Record of Foreign Opinion with a Register of Fact* (Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co., 1917) — an almost encyclopaedic summary of the contemporary public debate — must have been spin-offs of his MI7 assignments.⁴⁵

Karl Walter was born in Edinburgh and educated at Tonbridge, Lausanne and Florence. He had tried fruit farming in Tuscany and banking in Rio de Janeiro and Bordighera before joining the *Kansas City Star* newspaper as its City editor in 1908, where he remained until 1915.⁴⁶ Having moved back to the UK, in 1917 he established the Reciprocal News Service (an outwardly unofficial news agency, whose main function was to supply the important newspapers of the American Midwest with British news and opinions).⁴⁷ In 1924–34 Walter was a secretary of the Horace Plunkett Foundation for Cooperative Studies.⁴⁸ In 1942–47, he worked for the Bank of England. In between, and afterwards, he lived in Bordighera (1934 to 1940, as well as 1948 to 1960), Bristol (1960 to 1962), Geneva and Vienna (1962 to 1963) — and London (1940–41 and 1963–65), where he died. Walter was the author, translator and editor of *More poems* (Bordighera: <s. n.>, 1906), *Co-operation and Charles Gide* (London: P. S. King, 1933), *Cooperation in Changing Italy* (London: P. S. King and Son, 1934), *Class Conflict in Italy* (London: P. S. King and Son, 1938)⁴⁹ and *Many Maternities* (London: <The Author>, 1965). It is not clear how much

study of 'Russian Lyrical Poetry', from the epic folk songs (*byliny*) to Nikolai Nekrasov, in *The Oxford and Cambridge Review*, July 1912, pp. 155–69; and translated Semen Podyachev's 'Story of Present-Day Russia' for *The Empire Review*, April 1923, pp. 344–55.

⁴⁴ Magnus's preface to *A Concise Grammar of the Russian Language* might hold a clue to his Russian tutor's possible identity. In it, Mark Sieff is the only teacher of Russian from England who is personally named and thanked by Magnus for rendering him an 'invaluable assistance' with the book (p. [XVII]).

⁴⁵ For a review of *Pros and Cons*, see *The Scotsman* of 4 January 1917.

⁴⁶ For most of the information on Karl Walter we are obliged to his great-granddaughter Natasha. See also the obituary of Karl Walter's son, Dr William Grey Walter, in *The Times* of 9 May 1977.

⁴⁷ The scheme, however, was endorsed and initially financed by the Foreign Office Department of Information (see the National Archives at Kew (FO 395/83), as well as Karl Walter's letter to the editor of the *Times* published on 7 July 1941).

⁴⁸ On some of his activities in this capacity, see the National Archives at Kew (CO 318/394/4 and CO 318/398/7).

⁴⁹ For reviews of *Cooperation in Changing Italy* and *Class Conflict in Italy*, see *The Irish Times* of 21 July 1934 and *The Manchester Guardian* of 12 August 1938 respectively.

Russian he knew, if any at all (he published translations from Latin and Italian).⁵⁰

Magnus and Walter co-translated a further book, a collection of three plays by Anatoly Lunacharsky, the then People's Commissar for the Enlightenment in Bolshevik Russia. Just like *The Dark*, it was published in 1923 (by Routledge) — at the end of the year, in late November-early December — and included *Faust and the City*, *Vasilisa the Wise* and *The Magi*.⁵¹ Curiously, *Vasilisa the Wise* came out in a separate (limited) edition in Winter 1922 (by Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co), and the only translator mentioned in the book was Magnus. However, in the 'Translator's Preface' to *Vasilisa*, Magnus states: 'although my name appears on the title page, I feel that the merit of the translation is due to the patience and skill of my collaborator, Mr Karl Walter'.⁵²

According to Routledge's royalty accounts for 1923–35 (item 46, sheet 4513), kept at UCL Library's Special Collections, it was Karl Walter who was paid a 10% share of the sales proceeds for the 754 copies sold by 31 March 1924 (35 were sent to the colonies and 520 to the United States). The book's print run was 2,000 copies, and Karl Walter's honorarium amounted to £13.6.9. In the surviving financial documents, Magnus's name is not even mentioned.⁵³

⁵⁰ See *Pervigilium Veneris*, transl. and notes by Karl Walter. London: <s. n.>, 1947; Paolo Carboni, *Silk: Biology, Chemistry, Technology*, transl. by Karl Walter. London: Chapman and Hall, 1953.

⁵¹ From Magnus and Walter's prefatory introduction of Lunacharsky to the Anglophone reader, the critic Edward Shanks surmised that 'not too much will be lost in the process of translation; and, whatever is lost, much of interest will certainly remain, for Lunacharski is largely a political and philosophical writer' (*The Times Literary Supplement* of 13 December 1923). However, a *Manchester Guardian* reviewer, in the issue of 14 February 1924, claimed that 'the plays have been translated into English that has the strength of purity. The verse has a steady level of discrimination and the prose has a steady level of vigour'. Writing for the August 1924 issue of *The Bookman*, R. Ellis Roberts begged to differ: 'Mr Magnus and Mr Walter have done their best no doubt but they both cling obstinately to a form of rhetorical writing which is peculiarly ill-adapted to translation. Were their errors in style confined to the verse part of the plays we might be inclined to blame only the original; but the rendering of the prose, when they were not hampered by the need for metre or rhyme, shows an equal inability to write nervous, colloquial, conversational English' (p. 285).

⁵² *Vasilisa the Wise: A Dramatic Fairy Tale* by A. V. Lunacharski. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co., 1922, p. 5; cf. 'Mr Magnus's translation of <Vasilisa's> prose and poetry (which is in good English, and may be accepted as minutely faithful) reads sometimes like the libretto of an opera' (Harold Hannington Child in *The Times Literary Supplement* of 1 March 1923). For yet another review of *Vasilisa* (signed A. E. R.), see *The New Age* of 25 June 1923.

⁵³ Walter continued to draw his royalties for the Lunacharsky book on an annual basis (£3.9.0 for 99 copies sold in 1924–25, £0.13.6 for 19 copies sold in 1925–26, £0.18.0 for 27 copies sold in 1926–27 and £0.19.1 for 29 copies sold in 1927–28).

It is highly likely that Karl Walter became the sole recipient of the royalties⁵⁴ because in the spring of 1923 Magnus moved to Russia,⁵⁵ having apparently decided to cast his lot in with the Bolsheviks.⁵⁶ On 18 May 1923, Magnus was employed as a translator at the publishing department of the Third Communist International but left the job (or perhaps lost it) in a month or so. It is possible that Lunacharsky, whom Magnus had been in touch with at least since 1921,⁵⁷ asked him to translate *The Magi* and *Faust and the City*, in addition to *Vasilisa the Wise*, to keep him gainfully employed. Magnus also had some private means, having inherited money from an uncle. At the end of 1923, Magnus reportedly embarked on a journey across Russia, 'fulfilling a wish postponed during the war and subsequent events, of pursuing his studies in the folklore and legends of the country. <...> Lunacharski <...> facilitated his travels in the interior of the country'.⁵⁸ Sadly, Magnus contracted typhus and, after treatment at the Uzkoe sanatorium in the summer of 1924, died of complications at the Semashko hospital in Moscow on 11 September 1924: 'He was attacked by a malignant germ, and arrangements were being made to bring him home <to the UK. — RD, AR> in the care of a friend, but he succumbed after a short illness'.⁵⁹

⁵⁴ Oddly enough, answering questions posed to him in 1927 by the American journalist Laura Patrick Knickerbocker, Lunacharsky mistakenly named Walter as the only translator of his three plays into English, see N. A. Trifonov (ed.), *A. V. Lunacharskii: Neizdannnye materialy*, Moscow: Nauka, 1970, p. 53 (Literaturnoe nasledstvo, vol. 82).

⁵⁵ Previously Magnus had visited France, Holland, Denmark, Germany and Sweden.

⁵⁶ Magnus's great-nephew, Mr Robert Sandell, who has generously shared with us the results of his extensive private research into Magnus's life, believes that the move was aided by a combination of Magnus's idealistic left-wing politics (he penned a utopian novel, *A Japanese Utopia* (George Routledge and Sons, 1905) and held an opinion that 'the inherent right of people <is> to govern themselves in freedom' (*Roumania's Cause and Ideals*, p. 150)) — and family tensions (a third child and a second son, he abandoned Judaism at the age of 19, and his father apparently wrote to his mother that he would continue to do his duty by him, but no more than that). Although Magnus's annotated bilingual edition of the *Tale of the Armament of Igor* is dedicated to his father, it is perhaps best not to draw any far-reaching conclusions from that alone, because Magnus's *Pros and Cons* is dedicated 'to the Enemy'.

⁵⁷ Lunacharsky's preface to the English edition of *Vasilisa the Wise* is dated 1921, see *A. V. Lunacharskii: Neizdannnye materialy*, p. 564. In Magnus's personal file at the Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History (RGASPI), there is Lunacharsky's letter to the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs of 8 December 1922, in which he characterises Magnus as a translator and scholarly publisher (and a 'sincere friend of Soviet Russia'), whom he has corresponded with for over a year (this letter, as well as other Magnus-related documents, have been summarised by RGASPI's Deputy Director, Valery Shepelev, in his letter no. 1221 of 30 November 2004 to the architect Boris Evgenyevich Pasternak; we would like to express our gratitude to Mr Pasternak for this information).

⁵⁸ L. A. Magnus's obituary in *The Times* of 15 September 1924. See also his obituary in *The Jewish Chronicle* of 19 September 1924.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

Magnus was buried at the Dorogomilovo cemetery, which does not exist anymore. Shortly before his death he dictated a letter to the prominent Russian scholar Pavel Sakulin, Magnus's main contact in Russia, thanking him for his help in securing a place for him at Uzko (Sakulin was a member of the Central Commission for the Improvement of the Lives of Scientists, TsEKUBU, which managed the sanatorium).⁶⁰

In the absence of a file on *The Dark* at the University of Reading (where most other Hogarth Press files are kept), it is not clear either why it was decided to go for *The Dark* (now believed to be 'a crucial work in <Andreev's> career'⁶¹), or how the Hogarth Press became involved. Walter's wife, Minerva Lucrezia Hardy, known as Margaret and then Daisy and then Dee, formerly a *New York Times* and *Kansas City Star* journalist, briefly worked for Virginia Woolf as a cook, although she was 'a born lady',⁶² had a car and a son (the scientist William Grey Walter, 1910–77) at King's College, Cambridge. Virginia Woolf wrote of Mrs Walter (whom she mistakenly calls Mrs Walters) in her letter to Helen Anrep of 27 June 1930: 'She tosses off every sort of luxury and mends my stockings — all for love, it is said; and a passion for Leonard's books on Co-operation'.⁶³ Although it is tempting to use this as a proof that Karl Walter and Leonard Woolf met through their shared interest in the co-operative movement, it is not obvious that they had known each other as early as, say, 1921. The current working hypothesis is that for Routledge — Magnus's natural port of call — Russian topics, and especially literary translations from Russian, were not a priority. Now known as one of the largest international academic publishers, the firm, established in 1836, throughout the nineteenth century made its main profit on cheap reprints, after fifty years in trade reaching a 'total output of about 5000 titles, an average of two volumes each week'.⁶⁴ In the early twentieth century, 'its control of

⁶⁰ The Russian State Archive of Literature and Art (RGALI), f. 444 (P. N. Sakulin), op. 1, d. 538 (we would like to thank Boris E. Pasternak for supplying both the archival reference and a photocopy of this document).

⁶¹ James B. Woodward, *Leonid Andreyev: A Study*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969, p. 180. Cf. also 'The story <...> occupies a place in the literary career of Leonid Andreev which is incommensurate with its modest length' (Andrew Barratt, 'Maksim Gor'ky and Leonid Andreev: At the Heart of "Darkness"', in Nicholas Luker (ed.), *The Short Story in Russia, 1900–1917*, Nottingham: Astra Press, 1991, p. 73).

⁶² *The Letters of Virginia Woolf*, ed. by Nigel Nicolson, London: Hogarth Press, 1978, vol. 4, p. 179 (Virginia Woolf to Katherine Arnold-Forster of 21 June 1930).

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 182. See Leonard Woolf's *Co-operation and the Future of Industry* (1918; republished in 1928), *Socialism and Co-operation* (1921) and *International Co-operative Trade* (1922).

⁶⁴ James J. Barnes and Patience P. Barnes, 'George Routledge and Sons', in Patricia J. Anderson and Jonathan Rose (eds), *British Literary Publishing Houses, 1820–1880*, Detroit and London: Brucoli Clark Layman, 1991, p. 265.

Kegan Paul enabled Routledge to expand its offerings in fields such as science, technology and literature, and to cover the full range of publications, from the cheapest and most ephemeral to the scholarly and highly sophisticated'.⁶⁵ Before the Russian revolution and the civil war, Routledge publishing catalogues tended to ignore Russian titles — if one discounts books like Petr Koz'min's *Flour Milling* (1917), translated by M. Falkner and Theodor Fjelstrup. In the 1920s the situation changed a little (although Russian themes continued to remain rather marginal for Routledge). In 1924, Lunacharsky's plays were followed by M. C. Beverley's translation of Sergei Aksakov's *Chronicles of a Russian Family* (1856), while the year 1926 saw the appearance of memoirs and diaries of Dostoevsky's wife in Samuil Koteliansky's translation. Still, publishing too many translations from Russian within a short space of time might have seemed a risky business decision even if you were the company's director and your own younger brother was a co-translator of the manuscripts submitted for consideration.⁶⁶ Kegan Paul, Trench and Trubner was more Russia-friendly, but focused on teaching aids (dictionaries, readers and language manuals), rather than translations proper. By the same token, although the Hogarth Press was a much more modest enterprise, established only in 1917, five out of its twenty five titles before *The Dark*, i. e. 20% of its entire output — were Russian translations (of Gorky's and Countess Tolstoy's memoirs, Bunin's short stories, Chekhov's notebooks and Dostoevsky's drafts). These translations were supplied by the above-mentioned Mr Koteliansky, the Hogarth Press's principal expert on Russian affairs, who even taught Mrs Woolf some Russian.⁶⁷ The Woolfs, however, found him a difficult person to deal with, and might have been on the lookout for a chance to break his monopoly, so to speak.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 266.

⁶⁶ In his letter to Lunacharsky of 20 April 1927, written in English and surviving in a Russian translation in RGALI (f. 279, op. 1, d. 22, l. 175–175ob; the archival reference and the letter's transcript have been kindly supplied by Boris E. Pasternak), Walter reminds him of the London edition of his plays, co-translated with Magnus, and expresses his regret that the publishers turned down the next volume, also prepared by Magnus and Walter. The volume was meant to include Lunacharsky's plays *The Deliverance of Don Quixote*, *Oliver Cromwell* and *The King's Barber* (see Leonard Magnus, 'Introduction', in *Three Plays of A. V. Lunacharski*, London: George Routledge and Sons, 1923, p. VIII). An explanation could be found in Routledge's stock books for 1920–24 and 1925–29, also kept at UCL Library's Special Collections. They show the following sales figures (which are slightly different from the above-cited royalty accounts): 825 copies of Lunacharsky's plays were sold in 1923–24, 106 in 1924–25, 20 in 1925–26, 27 in 1926–27, 29 in 1927–28 and 1 in 1928–29. In other words, the book did not catch on. About a half of its print run remained unsold six years after publication.

⁶⁷ For more on Koteliansky, see A. Rogachevskii, 'Samuel Koteliansky and the Bloomsbury Circle', *Forum for Modern Language Studies*, XXXVI (4), 2000, pp. 368–385.

Whichever way it was that the translators and the publishers of *The Dark* found each other, the Hogarth Press's anniversary announcement of winter 1922 listed *The Dark* as one of the books they hoped to publish in the next twelve months.⁶⁸

The Dark was printed in Germany, presumably to take advantage of the exchange rate between the pound and the rapidly depreciating German mark (thus, on 1 August 1922, the British pound stood at 2,850 marks; on 5 September 1922, it reached 6,525 marks — and by the end of the year it was worth between 30,000 and 40,000 marks). This created a problem at British customs when the book's print run was shipped to the UK. Virginia Woolf's letter to Mary Hutchinson of 12 October 1922 reveals: 'our edition of Andreev is kept in bond at Hull until we have fought the act of 1887 which requires all books printed in Germany to say so, on the flyleaf in letters not less than one inch high'.⁶⁹

On the reverse of the title-page of *The Dark* it does say 'Printed in Germany',⁷⁰ but in letters 1/8th (capitals) and 1/16th inches (ordinary) high. It is relatively safe to assume, therefore, that the Woolfs must have won their battle with the customs.

A particular set of circumstances makes it fairly easy to establish the textual source of Magnus and Walter's translation of *The Dark*. Because Andreev's Berlin editions had to appear slightly in advance of the Russian ones, to secure copyright protection in countries that were signatories to the Berne Convention (Russia was not one of them, although it did sign a mutual copyright protection agreement with Germany), the copy of the text sent, inevitably in a hurry, to Berlin, sometimes did not include Andreev's final alterations, which were therefore only reflected in the first Russian edition.

Judging by a list of variants, it is possible to see which chunks of text coincide across the Berlin, *Shipovnik* and *Dark* editions and are not in Andreev's 1910s collected works, which Magnus and Walter could also have had access to. There are several variants common to all three texts and not in the later editions, but one particular variant is only in the Berlin and not in the *Shipovnik* and *Dark* texts.

For the most part the variant readings are either too minor to be reliably reflected in the translation, or they are also found in other versions. But there are two whole sentences that are either present (1) in both Ber-

⁶⁸ The announcement is kept among Leonard Woolf's papers at the University of Sussex (LWP IQ3A).

⁶⁹ *The Letters of Virginia Woolf*, ed. by Nigel Nicolson, London: Hogarth Press, 1980, vol. 6, pp. 500—01.

⁷⁰ The printer's name is given as "Dietsch & Brückner, Weimar".

lin and *Shipovnik* almanach, or absent from them both (2)), to the exclusion of all other versions, and one short sentence that is present in Berlin and absent from the *Shipovnik* almanach (3):

1) p. 23 of *The Dark*:

"What was it made you so angry with me, that you struck me, Liuba?"

The girl hesitated and then answered sharply.

"There was nothing else for it so I struck you. I didn't kill you, so why make a fuss about it?"

The sentence 'The girl hesitated <...>' only occurs in the Berlin and *Shipovnik* almanach versions.

2) p. 30 of *The Dark*:

"Where can you go now? You have nowhere to go. You are honourable. I saw it the moment you kissed my hand."

Missing from the Berlin and *Shipovnik* almanach versions is a whole sentence 'У подлеца дорог много, а у честного одна.' (A dishonest man has many roads to follow, while the honest man has only one.)

3) p. 34 of *The Dark*:

<...> Nor was this Christ; but something else, something more dreadful.

"Oh, this is dreadful, Liuba!"

In the Berlin version after 'something more dreadful' there is a sentence that is unique to that version: 'Это дьявол!' (This is the devil!)

1) & 2) show that *The Dark* had to be based on either Berlin or the *Shipovnik* almanach. 3) eliminates Berlin and leaves just the *Shipovnik* almanach.

Thus the comparison of *The Dark* and all the versions of 'T'ma' potentially available to the translators makes it possible to rule out, on balance of probability, the Berlin Ladyzhnikov edition, and to identify the *Al'manakh Shipovnika* edition as their most likely source. This is somewhat surprising, because the Ladyzhnikov edition of 'T'ma' was much easier to find in the West than the *Shipovnik* almanach, which was not exactly common outside Russia.⁷¹ This, in addition to his Lunacharsky contacts, might indicate that Magnus was rather well connected and perhaps relied on private advice and assistance in his choice and acquisition of texts for translation. Lunacharsky, for one, certainly acted as a go-between for

⁷¹ However, all the Ladyzhnikov editions bore on the reverse of their title pages the warning in Russian and German that the copyright was protected both by the Russian-German and the Berne conventions: Авторское право закреплено на основании Русско-Германской, равно и Бернской литературной конвенции / Alle Rechte vorbehalten, insbesondere das Übersetzungsrecht in fremde Sprachen — all the more reason for using a Russian edition!

Magnus. Thus, in his letter to the poet Sergei Gorodetsky of 26 October 1922, Lunacharsky characterises Magnus as a 'polite and very talented translator <...>, who has rendered admirably into English *The Tale of the Armament of Igor* and the best works by <Leonid> Andreev, etc. He would like to translate several of your best works into English and is asking you to make a selection and send them to him in London'.⁷²

The translation of *The Dark* reads rather well, as might be expected from members of the cultured elite at a time when achieving an expressive written style was one of the goals of education. Some things in the original were compressed and slightly re-arranged to make for a smoother flow. However, the translators' knowledge of Russian was not flawless. From time to time, they fall into rather obvious traps, such as the one posed by Russian using one word ('нога') for English's two ('leg' and 'foot'), which results in the phrase 'his dirty bare legs' for 'его грязные ноги' (p. 51), when it should have been 'his dirty feet'.

There are quite a few omissions of phrases for no apparent reason (e. g. the Russian words for 'tall' and 'broad-shouldered', ignored in the following phrase on p. 8: 'he also in black, and just as pale', for 'он, высокий, широкоплечий, также в черном и также бледный'), as well as some skating over of difficult passages (e. g. on p. 9: 'He grinned and raised his shoulders, as though laughing silently, distorting his face as people must who are stealthy and for some reason secretive, even when they are alone' for 'Поднял высоко плечи — и оскалился, делая вид, что смеется, но не смеясь, с той потребностью двигать и играть лицом, какая бывает у людей скрытных и почему-либо таящихся, когда они остаются наконец одни', which in fact means 'He raised his shoulders high — and bared his teeth, pretending to laugh, but not actually doing so, acting from that compulsion to make their faces move and play which secretive people experience when they are trying to hide for some reason and finally find themselves alone').

There are also clear mistakes in *The Dark*. Thus, the first sentence of the second paragraph of the story (p. 5) reads in the original: 'Приходилось изворачиваться и теперь' (Now was the time to take evasive action again.) In Magnus and Walter's translation it reads: 'Chance this time had turned dangerously against him'. On p. 7, the translation 'even killing men who are too importunate' misrepresents 'даже бьют слишком назойливых мужчин' in the original (a mere 'hitting' would be correct). On p. 33 is the sentence 'So she was Truth!..', which is the equivalent of: 'Так вот она, правда...' (So that is the truth...). On p. 45, 'conversation

⁷² R. Gorodetskaia, "'Vo mne zvenit vesennii problemsk schast'ia...': K 100-letiiu so dnia rozhdeniia Sergeia Gorodetskogo', *Literaturnaia gazeta*, 8 February 1984, p. 7.

had turned on this same man who had been dodging them all, and the superintendent, with the cynicism of an old sot...' is given for 'вели разговор о нем, о котором бредила эти дни вся полиция, и пристав с цинизмом старого, пьяного своего человека...' (They were talking about the man who had made all the policemen rave about him, and the superintendent, with the cynicism of an old drunkard who was one of their own...) Maybe the oddest decision Magnus and Walter took was to translate the crucially important word 'хороший' as 'fine', instead of the more obvious and appropriate 'good'. The terrorist's "Я не хочу быть хорошим" thus becomes, on p. 36, 'I do not want to be fine'. The translators are consistent throughout the text; so it was clearly a conscious decision.⁷³

Translators' errors are not the only problem with *The Dark*. Something went badly wrong with its chapter divisions. Chapters 1–3 are as in the Russian, but chapters 4–5 are not numbered in the English at all, chapter 6 turns up in quite the wrong place, being just a section of chapter 5 in the original, and the Russian chapter 6 becomes chapter 7 (we are talking just about the numbers, not the sections of text themselves). Someone must have been drunk not to notice that the book had chapters 1–3 and 6–7, but nothing in between! This is especially puzzling given that the book had two translators, neither of whom apparently had the opportunity to read the proofs — and no one else did it for them either!

Nevertheless, according to the monthly and yearly sales figures from the account books held at the University of Reading, *The Dark* was the second most successful Hogarth Press Russian book out of six Russian translations published between July 1920 (the appearance of the Hogarth Press's first Russian venture, Gorky's reminiscences of Leo Tolstoy) and January 1923, when *The Dark* came out. In the first six months after their respective publications — which normally marks the peak of sales and serves as the main criterion in calculating a book's commercial success — the former sold 1070 copies, and the latter, 579 copies, outselling, within this space of time, even Chekhov's *Notebooks* (1921, 564 copies after the first six months). Moreover, according to the same criterion, *The Dark* also outsold every single Russian translation produced by the same firm between 1921

⁷³ Needless to say, the reviewers' verdicts on the translation were predictably wide of the mark. An anonymous reviewer said: 'The translation by L. A. Magnus and K. Walter is, so far as we are able to judge <the emphasis is ours. — RD, AR>, extremely well done' (*The Spectator*, 3 March 1923, p. 372). John Middleton Murry, who did not have any Russian, also thought that the book was 'admirably translated' (*The Nation and the Athenaeum*, 13 January 1923, p. 582).

and 1936⁷⁴ (when the last translations from Russian, Olesha's *Envoy* and Tolstoy's *On Socialism*, came out under the auspices of the Hogarth Press's original owners).⁷⁵ *The Dark* continued to sell in modest numbers even 15 years after its appearance, bringing the total revenue in 1937 (the last year showing in the accumulative profit and loss account files at the University of Reading) to 20 pounds 4 shillings and 11 pence. A quarter of the gross profits was paid to the author (Karl Walter alone, because of Magnus's absence from the UK and subsequent premature demise), as is evident from the first accounts book kept at the University of Sussex, SxMs13, Ad. 14 (IQ1a): 'Andreev *The Dark*, April 5, 1924, 590 copies sold, gross profit 19.5.6, to author⁷⁶ 4.16.5 (paid 5/7/24), Press 14.9.1'.⁷⁷

The Dark evoked response from British periodicals right across the main political spectrum, from moderate conservatives to moderate socialists. *The Spectator* was perhaps the most enthusiastic about the book stating that: 'Mr and Mrs Woolf have done well to publish Andreev's superb short story <...>. It will not appeal either to those who regard fiction as a mild relaxation or to those who are squeamish when confronted with the grimmer aspects of life, but of its fineness as a work of art and its fundamental morality there can be no question'.⁷⁸

To make Andreev's story resonate better with the British reader, the reviewer drew a flattering comparison between *The Dark* and Thomas

⁷⁴ There were exceptions, of course. The sales of Bunin's *Well of Days* were higher in the second six-month period after its publication (643 copies) than in the first six months (465 copies) — but only because the book came out in March 1933, and in November of that year it was announced that Bunin had been awarded the Nobel Prize for literature.

⁷⁵ In 1938, Virginia Woolf was replaced by John Lehmann as a co-owner of the Press, and in 1947 it amalgamated with Chatto and Windus.

⁷⁶ It is not altogether certain if the word 'author' here stands for Leonid Andreev, who had been dead for five years by then, or even for his widow Anna Il'inichna, who lived in Western and Central Europe in the 1920s, actively promoting — and getting paid for — Andreev's works, particularly with the help of Herman Bernstein in the US. As the translators used the *Shipovnik* edition, they might well have been unaware of the existence of the Berlin edition (which had protected 'T'ma's' copyright in the West). If this is the case, the Hogarth Press might have felt that it had no legal obligation to pay Andreev (or his heirs) for translating, and the word 'author' on this occasion might have meant the translators (i.e. presumably Walter, because Magnus had already left for Russia at the time). The fact that in the Authors' Accounts files for 1926–27, kept at Reading, Karl Walter is explicitly mentioned in the short description of *The Dark* ('K Walter / Andreev'), seems to support our conjecture.

⁷⁷ According to the Authors' Accounts files for 1926–28, kept at Reading, in 1926–27 ten copies of *The Dark* were sold, for which Karl Walter was credited 3.10, and the press, 11.7. In 1927–28, six copies of *The Dark* were sold, Walter's share being 3.5 and the Press's, 10.3 ½. These were indicative of the volume of annual sales of Andreev's book from the mid-1920s — to the mid-1930s.

⁷⁸ Anon, 'A Great Story', *The Spectator*, 3 March 1923, p. 371.

Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* (1895),⁷⁹ on the basis that Andreev's revolutionary and prostitute 'from a deep antagonism <...> come to an understanding of one another and, in the end, <...> each has included in himself that quality in the other which was before so completely foreign to him'⁸⁰ — in apparent similarity to Jude Fawley and Sue Bridehead's mutual evolution, although it takes years and does not happen overnight, as in *The Dark*.

Andreev's technique was described by the same critic in a distinctly complimentary way: 'The external action in *The Dark* is almost negligible, but the psychological action is concentrated and immense, and when we begin to look more closely at the story we are amazed not only at the power and accuracy of the psychological development, but also at the masterly sureness with which Andreev produces his effects. He has the economy of line and the precision of touch of the great artist'.⁸¹

An anonymous reviewer in *The Manchester Guardian* was somewhat more restrained: 'This is a Russian variation on the Samson-Delilah theme, told with an icy objectivity. The Samson, a champion of Nihilism, achieves no final, fatal splendour of crashing ceilings; from such romanticism the pitiless art of Andreev would naturally recoil. Samson is shorn of his austere devotion to the cause and delivered to the guard; there is no more than what a reader may put into it. Andreev is here at his coldest, suggesting only that this is the kind of thing that happens, and refusing utterly to access, comment, or explain. "Compassion is not my business", he seems to say; "if you must feel, feel at your pleasure. I fling you facts. These are the lower depths, and these are the odd creatures that swim in them". And with that he shrugs his shoulders and passes on. The result is a hard, glittering cleverness of description which is too impersonal to stir one with the unmistakable compulsion of great art'.⁸²

For his part, Raymond Mortimer, a regular reviewer of fiction in *The New Statesman*, while denying that Andreev and romanticism had nothing in common, did maintain that Andreev was not a writer of the calibre of Turgenev or Chekhov⁸³ — but praised *The Dark*⁸⁴ for deviating from

⁷⁹ *The Spectator* had previously made several generous attempts at inscribing Andreev in the British and European literary tradition. His fiction was likened, among others, to Maupassant, Galsworthy and Swift (see Anon, 'A Russian Pessimist', *The Spectator*, 22 Oct 1910, p. 653), and his plays, to Maeterlinck and Strindberg (see Anon, 'The Plays of Andreyeff', *The Spectator*, 15 May 1915, p. 689).

⁸⁰ Anon, 'A Great Story', *The Spectator*, 3 March 1923, p. 371.

⁸¹ *Ibid.* Cf. 'We are delighted by the marvellous economy with which <in *The Dark*> Andreev creates his characters at the same time as he develops his story, using their thoughts, emotions and bodily appearance as active agents in that development' (Martin Armstrong, 'The Art of Katherine Mansfield', *Fortnightly Review*, March 1923, p. 484).

⁸² *The Manchester Guardian* of 31 January 1923 (unsigned).

Andreev's trademark exploitation of 'sheer physical horror to appal us',⁸⁵ and helpfully put the main theme of Andreev's story⁸⁶ in a wider spiritual context. According to him, in *The Dark*, Andreev 'brushes away physical agonies and the distresses of death, and confronts us with the interior chasms of the soul. We are reminded that Russia is the heir of Byzantium, and of all the aptitude for heresy which results from the meeting of East and West, where dialectic hangs upon mysticism as a greedy lamb upon the unregarding ewe. There have been sectaries (especially in Russia, I suspect) so overwhelmed by the spectacle of Divine Forgiveness that they preached the duty of sinning in order to bring about more manifestations of this miraculous grace; others, in their horror of spiritual pride, have urged men to mortify this most hideous of the deadly sins at all costs, even by committing offences less dangerous because more obviously degrading. It is with an analogous paradox that *The Dark* is concerned'.⁸⁷

This very paradox was turned into a butt of the irony of an anonymous reviewer from *The New Age*, who saw the funny side in the protagonists' life-altering experience: 'The Russian writers are geniuses in discovering truth in strange places — and Andreev's revolutionary finds it in a brothel. He sought sleep, but he found truth; and the truth that might be expected to reside in a brothel killed him spiritually. For he, the virgin, dedicated to death, was debauched by the woman with a philosophy that seems a grotesque parody of Christianity in this setting; and when she, satisfied with her victory, thrilled to the revolutionary message, and would have joined him in his work, she discovered that he had forsaken all to satisfy her, was not going back to the party because he no longer "wanted to be fine". There was nothing to be done but sit and wait for the police, and occupy the time with psychologising. Andreev is in his ele-

⁸³ 'He is regrettably romantic, violent in phrase, slapdash in colour, imprecise in expression, and often obscure from exuberance rather than profundity. He writes as if intoxicated, and the personages loom through his work, unsteady, large, and at the same time remote, like people seen through mists induced by wine' (*The New Statesman*, 24 February 1923, p. 602).

⁸⁴ 'Books worth reading are rare enough for it to be worth most people's while to read such short and absorbing tales as *The Dark*' (*ibid.*, p. 603).

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 602.

⁸⁶ Defined by John Middleton Murry thus: 'In the chaos of the human world some bedrock of reality can be reached only by the deliberate acceptance of humiliation and degradation' (*The Nation and The Athenaeum*, 13 January 1923, p. 582). This is close to a more recent academic study of *The Dark*, which interprets its message as follows: 'in order to be an effective force for good, idealism and virtue must be brought into direct collision with the deformity and evil of life' (Woodward, *op. cit.*, p. 178).

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

ment here; and the spectacle of the half-naked man sitting on the bed swinging his leg, and refusing to say a word to the police, supplies him with enough material for the last five pages. It is, let us hope, characteristically Russian art; it is certainly sickening'.⁸⁸

It is difficult to say, who had the last word in this discussion, which, quite characteristically for Andreev's reception in the UK, was not in fact much of a discussion but looked rather like a selection of unrelated monologues (whose individual impressionistic observations were admittedly at times not without their merit), because its participants rarely if at all engaged with each other directly. It is even harder to speculate what wider impact (if any) *The Dark* might have had on its readers, who must have largely belonged to the British intellectual elite with liberal leanings, either part of, or similar in their views to, the Woolfs' Bloomsbury circle (the Hogarth Press closely reflected the Woolfs' personal preferences and interests representing 'Cambridge, Bloomsbury, *The Nation*, the Labour Party, <and> the Fabian Society'⁸⁹). To them, *The Dark* must have seemed a testimony to the failure of Russian revolutionary socialism, belated (it came to their attention fifteen years after its initial publication) but in no way less significant for that, because, with hindsight, after the 1917 revolution and the Russian civil war, the book looked like a gloomy but accurate prophecy. It might also have been perceived as a fictional companion to Andreev's political journalism, as exemplified by *S.O.S.* (which appeared in three different translations, aimed at the British public and published as a pamphlet by the Russian Liberation Committee and Union of the Russian Commonwealth, and also in the *Gazette of the Archangel Expeditionary Force* and the London periodical *The Nineteenth Century and After*). It is not by chance that in *S.O.S.*, when urging the Allies to help Russia in its struggle against the Bolsheviks, Andreev uses the same imagery of dark (or darkness; 't'ma' in the Russian original) to make his audience 'understand <...> that it is not *revolution* which is happening in Russia <...> it is chaos and darkness. <...> Like a wireless operator on a sinking steamer who through the night and the darkness sends the last call 'Come quickly to our aid <...> Save our souls'; so also I, moved by my faith in human clemency, throw into the dark space my prayer for

⁸⁸ *The New Age*, 1 February 1923, p. 226.

⁸⁹ Mary E. Gaither, 'The Hogarth Press: 1917–1938', in *A Checklist of the Hogarth Press, 1917–1938*, compiled by J. Howard Woolmer, London: The Hogarth Press, 1976, p. 5. Leonard Woolf was a student at Trinity, a literary editor of *The Nation* and a member of the Fabian Society and the Labour Party. *The New Age* and *The New Statesman*, where *The Dark* was reviewed, also had Fabian roots.

perishing human beings. If you but knew how dark the night is around us! No words can describe this darkness'.⁹⁰

An influential authority on Russian culture, Prince Mirsky, who refers to *The Dark* in his conclusions about Andreev's art, interpreted Andreev's despair as 'the necessary outcome of all the history of the <Russian> *intelligentsia*: the moment the "intelligent" ceased to be inspired by revolutionary faith, the universe became to him a meaningless and terrible void'.⁹¹ As a result, in Mirsky's opinion, Andreev was sending a 'message of thorough nihilism and negation — human life, society morals, culture are all lies — the only reality is death and annihilation and the only feelings that express human understanding of the truth are 'madness and horror'.⁹² For his part, the Russian-American Slavist Alexander Kaun, writing for a British academic journal, contended that Andreev's sole message seemed to be 'that once placed, without having been given the choice, in this vale of tears and once having visualised without fear all the folly and futility of existence, there remains one way for the self-respecting individual, namely a heroic life, stripped of pettiness and narrow selfishness'.⁹³ Given that these conflicting statements were made a few years after the publication of *The Dark*, it is doubtful if it helped the critics to make up their mind about the Andreev phenomenon, and the jury was still out on that one, even though, at least for some, *The Dark* appeared 'more of an achievement than any other story of <Andreev> that we have read'.⁹⁴ This demonstrates once again that there does not seem to be any obvious pattern in Andreev's treatment among the British literati, because it was in essence casual, fragmented and disjointed.

To an extent, the British interest in Andreev was sustained and fuelled by the revolutions and wars that Russia fell victim to, which partly served as a reason and an excuse for his deliciously gruesome art. However, after his death (which caused the last notable boost to his trans-

⁹⁰ Quoted from Carl Eric Bechhofer Roberts's review of the Russian Liberation Committee's edition of *S.O.S.* in the *Times Literary Supplement* of 17 July 1919. Here Bechhofer Roberts insists that 'in subsequent editions of this pamphlet the translation should be revised', and uses his own altered version of the English translation of *S.O.S.* that he reviews (cf. *S. O. S.: Russia's Call to Humanity*, by Leonid Andreev, with an introduction by Professor P. N. Miljukov. London: Russian Liberation Committee, 1919, pp. 27, 22). On the significance of 'dark', or 'darkness', for Andreev as a counter-revolutionary metaphor, see Barratt, op. cit., pp. 88–89.

⁹¹ D S Mirsky, *Contemporary Russian Literature, 1881–1925*, London: George Routledge and Sons, 1926, pp. 135.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 134.

⁹³ Alexander Kaun, 'What Was the Message of Andreyev?', *The Slavonic Review*, vol. IV, no. 10, 1925, p. 141.

⁹⁴ John Middleton Murry in *The Nation and the Athenaeum*, 13 January 1923, p. 582.

lations into English), the general British awareness of Andreev gradually petered out and changed its status from marginal to virtually non-existent. Was it because, as John Cournos, Andreev's translator,⁹⁵ put it in his feature on Andreev (re-iterating a point that had already been made a number of times before): 'Owing to its preoccupation with abnormal psychology, Andreyev's work is never likely to have a wide reading public in England'?⁹⁶

Curiously, Andreev shared this particular feature with Dostoevsky, which was duly observed, among others, by Serge Persky: 'Most of Andreyev's characters, like those of Dostoevsky, are abnormal, madmen or neurasthenics in whom are distinguishable marked traces of degeneration and psychic perversion'.⁹⁷ Yet Dostoevsky's reception in Britain, in the long run, does not seem to have been seriously hampered by his concentration on the psycho-pathological – in fact, quite the opposite, this may well have helped. How does one explain this strange case of double standards?

It is possible that the British hierarchical instincts, as well as a limited room for agents of alien culture to occupy British minds on a long-term basis, had something to do with it. They would not hesitate to assign an inferior rank to someone they did not necessarily know well enough, and when a recognized expert on Russia, such as Harold Williams, ventured his personal opinion ('There are times when <Andreev> may be said to serve as a cinematograph to Dostoevsky, that is to say, problems that caused Dostoevsky acute spiritual suffering are taken up by Andreev for the purposes of superficial, pictorial effect'⁹⁸), it was liable to be taken as a gospel. The lack of competence (and desire) to differentiate between two reportedly comparable foreign authors might well have led to the following line of thinking: 'since we already have Dostoevsky, what do we need Andreev for?'⁹⁹

⁹⁵ The Anglo-Russian Literary Society, founded in 1893 in London to promote the study of Russian language and literature and counting quite a few Russian speakers among its members, reported on his rendering of Andreev's *Silence* (Philadelphia: Brown Brothers, 1908): 'The readable, flowing translation of Mr Curnoss <sic> testifies to his command of English and knowledge of Russian' (*Proceedings of the Anglo-Russian Literary Society*, no. 56, 1909, p. 37).

⁹⁶ John Cournos, 'Leonid Andreyev', *Fortnightly Review*, February 1924, p. 290.

⁹⁷ Serge Persky, *Contemporary Russian Novelists* / Transl. from the French by Frederick Eisemann, London: Frank Palmer, 1914, p. 203.

⁹⁸ Harold Whitmore Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 197.

⁹⁹ Prince Mirsky bears a degree of responsibility for the decline in the British fascination with Andreev too, as his harsh judgement (Andreev 'dealt in ready-made clichés and was simply no craftsman', Mirsky, *op. cit.*, p. 131) was not lost in periodicals, like many of the more favourable views of the author, but survived in a book that for decades was used as a most authoritative source on immediate pre- and post-revolutionary Russian culture.

The appearance of *The Dark* in English translation did little to alter the situation. In his review of the story John Middleton Murry said: 'There are certain obvious relations between Andreev and Dostoevsky. The <*Dark's*> leading thought <...> is a familiar one in Dostoevsky. Some of the incidents also have a faint air of reminiscence: the kissing of Liuba's hand recalls Sonya and Raskolnikov, and the arrest of the revolutionary as he sits naked on the bed, even in its details, reminds us of the capture of Dmitrii Karamazov at Mokroe. But the clear and shining intellectual purpose which carries Dostoevsky through complications and subtleties infinitely greater than Andreev's is completely lacking to the smaller writer. <...> He appears to us rather as a man condemned to work out in the realities of life a few of the implications of Dostoevsky's thought'.¹⁰⁰

All in all, Andreev could not ultimately vie for the attention of the British in competition with the likes of Dostoevsky, Tolstoy and Chekhov.¹⁰¹ This does not mean, however, that he should be ignored by posterity. Without him, the history of the British (under)appreciation of Russian culture would be woefully incomplete.

¹⁰⁰ *The Nation and the Athenaeum*, 13 January 1923, p. 583. Andreev's reasons for deliberately Dostoevskian references, as well as his originality in the exploration of Dostoevskian themes in *The Dark*, are discussed in Barratt, op. cit., pp. 78–80.

¹⁰¹ In the second volume of *The Literatures of the World in English Translation: A Bibliography* (ed. by Richard C. Lewanski; New York: The New York Public Library and Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1971), however incomplete, Andreev's entries (including his US translations) occupy three full pages (pp. 190–93), whereas those of Dostoevsky take up five and a half pages (pp. 230–35); Chekhov's, almost sixteen pages (pp. 210–26); and Tolstoy's, just over sixteen pages (pp. 370–87). For comparison, the translations from Ivan Bunin — a Nobel Prize winner, who was born a year before Andreev but died almost 35 years after him — take up less than two full pages (pp. 208–10), while those of Gorky, Andreev's sponsor and mentor, just over eleven pages (pp. 248–59).