

### *Bibliographical Abstracts*

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HAROLD K. SCHEFSKI, CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LONG BEACH

Donskov, Andrew. "A Note on Tolstoj, Sarah Bernhardt and 'The Death of Ivan Il'ich.'" *Studia Phraseologica et Alia* (Festschrift für Josip Matesic' zum 65 Geburtstag) Supplementband 31 (1992): 67-79.

The subject of this article are the three performances of the French actress Sarah Bernhardt in Russia (1881, 1892, 1908). While Turgenev and Chekhov commented openly about the falsehood and artificiality which they associated with Ms. Bernhardt, Tolstoy preferred to make his negative comments less directly, consciously "weaving her into 'The Death of Ivan Il'ich'" which he was writing at the time of her first performance in his country. Her name is specifically mentioned when the family comes to visit their ailing father on the way to one of her shows. When mother, daughter, and fiancé get into a discussion about the merits of Sarah Bernhardt, Ivan Il'ich begins to see the French sensation as the embodiment of the falseness (*lozh'*) of his own life which he realizes "he acted rather than lived". To remove the bad taste with which this scene leaves him, Ivan Il'ich immediately thereafter summons the faithful servant Gerasim so that a semblance of truth can be restored to his final days.

Donskov, A. "Dramaticheskoe prisutstvie v Povesti L. N. Tolstogo 'Smert' Ivana Il'icha" *Nauka* 3 (1993): 149-153.

The author focuses primarily on the pivotal eighth chapter of Tolstoy's most famous novelle. He regards it as a dramatic piece in itself, since it conforms to the classical rule of a unity of time, place, and action. In this scene Ivan Il'ich endures four visits from those with whom he is closely associated, as his terminal illness takes control: 1) his doctor, 2) his wife, 3) the specialist, and 4) the family. This scene changes him from a prodigal son who has always placed form above substance to a man about to achieve a spiritual awakening. Once he realizes that his life has been only a performance up to now, Ivan Il'ich is ready to change its direction. The image of Sarah Bernhardt also figures in this work, since she symbolizes the predominance of technique over true talent and thus mirrors the untruthful life which the protagonist has led up to his epiphany.