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The Work of Intertextuality against Forgetting in Remizov's 1917 "Orison on the Downfall of the Russian Land"

The inherent connection of Remizov's stylized response to the revolutionary events of 1917 with the Old Russian literature is established and emphasized by its very title, which serves as a direct reference to the thirteenth-century "Slovo o pogibeli russkoi zemli" ("Orison on the Downfall of the Russian Land"). Remizov's text does not simply imitate its namesake, of which only a short fragment has been preserved, nor merely uses it as a model. Rather, his "Slovo" enters into a dialogue with this and several other medieval texts that capture a contemporary's response to what was perceived as the end of Rus at the time. To hear what the ancient texts-interlocutors of Remizov's "Slovo" contribute to this intertextual exchange, to make intelligible the dialogue of texts and cultures across time, over the "noise of time," to borrow Mandelstam's memorable phrase, I consider the place of Remizov's text in the context of three medieval works that treat the theme of the destruction of Russia, contemplate the passage from the old to the new Russia, and reflect on what is at stake during the times of cataclysmic change ("Slovo o pogibeli Russkoi zemli" / "Orison on the Downfall of the Russian Land" ca. 1237-1246, "Slova i poucheniia Serapiona Vladimirovskogo" / "Sermons and Homilies of Serapion of Vladimir" ca. 1230, 1270-1275, and 1612 "Plach o plenenii i konechnom razorenii Moskovskogo gosudarstva" / "Lament on the Capture and Final Destruction of the Muscovite State"). By tracing the textual lineage of Remizov's "Slovo o pogibeli russkoi zemli," I seek to elucidate the questions of how medieval tropes, figures, and themes adapted to the author's contemporary situation function in his text, and what the significance of his integration of these details into the tapestry of his narrative might be.