

**Title:** “Одни только люди, а кругом них молчание вот земля!”: Dostoevskii and L.N. Andreev

**Author:** Benjamin Jens, University of Wisconsin, Madison

Leonid Andreev’s engagement with Dostoevskii’s works has been well established by scholars such as H.H. King, Robert Louis Jackson and G.B. Kurliandskaia. Andreev himself told Leonid Grossman that “of past Russian writers Dostoevskii is closest of all to me. I consider myself his direct pupil and follower” (271).

A key issue for both authors was the ability of a person to connect and communicate with a fellow human being. Dostoevskii’s dialogues have inspired a variety of well-known theories. Alexander Kaun argues that for Andreev’s characters “communion with others is an essential need for them, but they are forced to the conclusion that communion is impossible, that human interrelations are skin deep, that mutual understanding is unrealizable” (192).

Previous studies have focused on the role of the word in Andreev’s depiction of unrealizable communion. This paper will explore Andreev’s use of silence in communication among characters. I will demonstrate how Andreev reimagines key scenes of silent communication in his predecessor’s works, such as events in *The Brothers Karamazov* and “Krotkaia,” to argue for a different understanding of *molchanie* and *tishina* than Dostoevskii’s. Where Dostoevskii allows for positive reasons for silence, Andreev emphasizes its negative role. *Molchanie* and *tishina* in Andreev’s works symbolize not only the inability of humanity to connect with each other, but also impossibility of communing with the divine.

Grossman, Leonid. *Bor’ba za stil’*. *Opyty po kritike i poetike*. Moskva: Nikitinskie subbotniki, 1927.

Kaun, Alexander. *Leonid Andreyev: A Critical Study*. NY: B.W. Huebsch, 1924.

bcjens@wisc.edu