

and Italian are good; his popular Greek is interesting. He quotes or refers to not only the Bible, but also the Greek fathers, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Bernard Clairvaux, Peter Lombard, and Bede. In addition, he refers to classical writers such as Plato, Aristotle, Xenophon, Cicero, Ovid, and Vergil.

These sermons will be useful not only to those interested in the life and work of Kyrillos Loukaris, but also to those interested in Greek letters, in the question of the union of the Orthodox and Latin churches, and in Orthodox theology. Even the philologist, interested in the formation of the modern Greek language and in the influence of learned Greek upon the popular language, will find some of the sermons important.

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THE FANTASTIC: A STRUCTURAL APPROACH TO A LITERARY GENRE. By *Tzvetan Todorov*. Translated from the French by *Richard Howard*. Foreword by *Robert Scholes*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975. xii, 180 pp. \$3.95, paper.

Tzvetan Todorov has played a major role in the rise and development of French Structuralism, the most significant trend in contemporary poetics. It was Todorov's translation of the fundamental texts of Russian Formalism which was to become one of the foundation stones of the movement. The book under review, a translation of his *Introduction à la littérature fantastique* (1970), reveals all the aspects of the author's admirable talent: his mastery of theoretical literature, his systematic and logically coherent treatment of literary structures, and his keen sensitivity to the subtleties of literary textures.

Todorov defines the fantastic as a specific literary genre located between the uncanny ("l'étrange") and the marvelous ("le merveilleux"). It is a field of ambiguity, of hesitation over the "natural" or "supernatural" character of narrated events: the reader's uncertainty about the status of the narrated events is a necessary condition of the fantastic. If the narrated events are revealed as natural, we find ourselves in the domain of the uncanny; if they are confirmed as supernatural, we are in the sphere of the marvelous. Thus, the fantastic is a transitional genre based on unresolved structural tensions. It is this interpretation of the fantastic which, in my opinion, links Todorov most closely to the Structuralist tradition. The Structuralists have always been most attracted to literary works or genres characterized by a precarious structural balance. They established structural oppositions in order to be able to describe explicitly the process of their annihilation.

Todorov exemplifies his theory of the fantastic by analyzing a wide range of narrative texts, drawn primarily from French and English literature. He cannot, however, bypass the work of at least one Russian writer, Nikolai Gogol. Discussing Gogol's short story "The Nose," Todorov points out that Gogol initiated a substantial transformation of the fantastic which led directly to such twentieth-century writers as Franz Kafka.

The English translation of Todorov's book includes an informative introduction by Robert Scholes. The volume is supplemented by an index, but the bibliography of primary and secondary sources, regrettably, has been omitted.

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