

Giulia De Florio

Abstract

Evolutions in Marshak's theatrical works for children

Marshak's plays are a relevant though less well-known part of his works for children. He begins to address children in the aftermath of the October Revolution and the First World War by writing plays for the 'The Children's Little Town' ('Detskij gorodok') in Krasnodar (today Ekaterinodar). He returns to theatre some years later with a new version of the play *Petrushka* and in the 1940s and 1950s with more developed texts for the stage.

This article considers two plays from the 1922 collection *Theatre for Children* (*Teatr dlja detei*), namely, *Petrushka* and *The Kitty's House* (*Koshkin dom*), in order to compare them with the new versions Marshak writes in later years. The goal of this examination is to identify which elements remain in both versions of the plays and which are omitted or changed to meet different artistic and/or ideological requirements. The analysis will show Marshak's unquestionable ability to draw from folk motifs and apply them to new contexts in order to project certain social values in the framework of his personal moral and artistic views on art for children. Moreover, the paper provides additional evidence about Marshak's technique of appropriation and elaboration as one of the pillars of his poetics.

Keywords: Samuil Marshak, theatre for children, *Petrushka*, *The Kitty's House*.