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CORRUPTION IN THE REPUBLIC OF LETTERS: MANNERS UNWORTHY OF SOVIET CITIZENS ARE FLOURISHING(DOCUMENTS FROM THE RUSSIAN STATE ARCHIVE OF LITERATURE AND ART (RGALI) ON COPYRIGHT VIOLATIONS AND PLAGIARISM: SPRING 1942)

## Abstract

The article studies modification, rewriting and actual copying and misappropriation of original literary work. It is for the first time that the following document noting the many shortcomings in protection and usage of literary property often resulting in plagiarism which sometimes extended to classical works of Shakespeare, Goethe, Hugo, Moliere and other masters, is published. The document is of particular importance in demonstrating that the least likely to miss an opportunity of using administrative resource were the “bosses”: theater managers, directors and conductors. More often than not money, big money was behind such infringements. Although such misconduct was combated, the accomplishments were minimal. The ‘necessity’ of these writings was justified by inaccuracy and incommodity of the translation, as often neither writers nor translators could give no objections anymore. Russian classic authors, Tolstoy, Gogol, Aksakov, Ostrovsky were handled similar lack of care. Works of young authors and playwrights from national republics were also quite ‘useful’: ‘drawbacks’ in their work were easy to find and assert. Some Georgian author wishing to be acted on Moscow stage kept mum and his

'co-author' spoke no Georgian. The Great Patriotic War brought these facts to notice as it became necessary to pay royalties to writers and managers of various creative institutions (theaters, etc.). Instances of copyright violations were collected by three famous authors: V.Shklovsky, O. Leonidov and Shershenevich.

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### Keywords

Archive, plagiarism, coercion to co-authorship, administrative resources, squandering of public funds

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