

**Natalya Sarana**

**National Research University Higher School of Economics, Moscow**

**Russian *Jane Eyre*: *Zhenskaya istoria* (A Story of a Woman) by U. Zhadovskaya and Feminine Bildungsroman in Russian Literature of 1860s**

The novel by U. Zhadovskaya, *Zhenskaya istoria*, was published in 1861. By the time the novel came out, Zhadovskaya had already been famed for her poems and her first and well-reviewed novel *Far from the big society* (1857).

The plot of *Zhenskaya istoria* is centered on a young girl Lisa, who is trying to find her calling and her place in the provincial life of her distant relatives. As the story develops, Lisa goes through all the stages of hero's growth inherent to a Bildungsroman character.

In my paper I will analyze *Zhenskaya istoria* as a text crucial to the study of feminine Bildungsroman in Russian literary history of 1860s and written in a deliberate dialogue with *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte.

*Jane Eyre* is thought to represent an example of a feminine Bildungsroman in British literature of 1840s and the key text on "the woman question" with its main topic lying in the search of not a perfect marriage, but of new experience. Accordingly, Lisa, Jane's Russian 'sister', feels that she is tired of her colorless life and dependence on others. Moreover, Russian text adopts resembling metaphors as found in *Jane Eyre*.

Zhadovskaya not only inherits the tradition of British feminine Bildungsroman, she also inscribes it in the discussion of "the woman question", one of the topic questions in Russian society of 1860s.