than on canonical sources and designed to suit Ivan's rhetorical purposes. Although Ivan constructs such a Christ in a conscious attempt to undermine the divine authority (and love) implicit in the canonical image, his strategies of containment and control ultimately fail. As Thompson notes, "even if broken into parts, the 'whole' absorbs them into itself; the smallest genuine fragments from the canonical incarnate Word are sufficient to break through the lies of a tyrant [the Grand Inquisitor] and the distortions of Ivan..." (p. 289). In contrast to Ivan's attempt at an anti-epiphany in the Legend stand both Alesha's countertext, the Life of Zosima, and the culminating vision of the Wedding Feast at Cana. As Thompson points out, "Ivan's Legend is a veiled prophecy projected into an evil past" (p. 305), while the Life of Zosima and the vision of Cana offer the transcendent fulfillment of prophecy preserved in cultural memory and perpetually revivable.

A further avenue of inquiry, implicit but not fully addressed in Thompson's argument, leads to the question of the reader's memory, how the experience of reading such a lengthy and complex novel, and recalling and integrating details from it, may precipitate in-the-reader experiences of remembering and foretelling (as well as possibly temporary forgetting) analogous to those depicted within the text. Even without this, The Brothers Karamazov and the Poetics of Memory constitutes an outstanding contribution to our understanding of the cultural, religious, and aesthetic concerns of The Brothers Karamazov. Its sensitive and judicious interpretation will be essential to any further treatment of the novel.

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The critic, when starting to read Thomas Wächter's The Artistic World of Chekhov's Late Stories, will not be able to suppress a certain amount of suspicion because of the fact that the five stories under consideration in the study — "Rothschild's Violin," "In the Ravine," "The Bishop," "The Bride," and "The Student" — encompass in terms of narrative text approximately one-fourth of the interpretative one offered in the book. As there should be a sensible balance between narrated and narrative time in primary literature, so should there be in secondary between text and interpretation. In several analyses of Chekhovian stories it has already been proven with what great subtlety the master-narrator used, i.e., mainly hid the origin of his sources, such as, for instance, anecdotes, legends, quotations from colleagues, and biblical texts. But Wächter considered it necessary, and that not without reason, to add his own interpretations and clarifications to the existing ones. He turns out to be very ambitious as he strives to have the absolute last word in whatever he discusses. This attitude occasionally irks the critic because although, according to Wächter, the views of other interpreters may have been right to a certain extent, they
invariably did not go far enough in their analysis, overlooked essential details, or were, in the end, simply deadly wrong.

It is, however, especially with reference to "The Bishop" that Wächter's interpretation must be considered unacceptable. There is no denying that there exists an intricate parallelism — and although Wächter is not the first one to have noticed it, his is easily the most detailed of the existing analyses — between the bishop's sufferings and those of Jesus Christ. And it is indeed most interesting to realize that Chekhov used what Wächter calls an inverted frame for his story. While Christ, by dying on the cross, fulfilled his human task and ascended into heaven to occupy his place at the right hand of the Father, the bishop, in the throes of death, finally finds his true self, his ordinariness, i.e., his humanness and is elated by this rediscovery. But, hereafter in a typical Chekhovian manner, nothing is said about the hero's death and where it leads him to. On the basis of this essential discrepancy, Wächter's suggestion that the story alludes to an equation of the bishop's figure and that of Christ, "Der Erzpriester - Ein underwear Christus" [The Bishop - another Christ] (p. 173) lacks any textual foundation. The title of the story "Arkhierei" is generally rendered into English as "The Bishop," and in biblical context translated as "high priest." Within the story Bishop Peter is properly addressed as "vashe preosviashchenstvo" [Your Grace] but Wächter is wrong that a similar title is used in Hebr. 4-14 for Jesus as High Priest. It says there: "Itak, imeia Pervoosviashchennika velikogo...," and in Greek: "Ekhontes oon arkhierea megan..." [Thus, having a great high priest...]. The adjective "great" is obviously used to differentiate between Jesus the high priest and his human successors. More serious, yet, the equation of Jesus and the bishop leads Wächter to claim that "The Bishop not only inverts and negates the fundamental logic in the christological concept of the Hebrew letter but of the Pauline and New Testament theology as such" (p. 191) and later on that Chekhov's story "manifests itself as an obvious profanation of the Johannine elevation [of Christ]." (p. 195)

The statements are unacceptable not because of any necessity to defend Chekhov against accusations of being aggressively atheistic but because they are in flagrant contradiction to Wächter's later statement that Chekhov would not have "been able to write a story such as The Bishop if he had not succeeded in distancing himself once more from, and being unattached to both his atheism and his Christian faith." (p. 222) Towards the end of the chapter Wächter even says: "The writer Chekhov found himself above life...." (p. 223) Since being distanced from and unattached to life, even being above it very accurately characterize the general position of Chekhov-the writer, it is unfounded to read any hidden attack on New Testament doctrines into the text of "The Bishop."

In all likelihood because of the greater balance (at a ratio of one to one-and-a-half) between narrative text and interpretation the chapter dealing with "In the Ravine" is the most satisfying. Wächter convincingly demonstrates how also in this story the device of inversion has been applied by the narrator. It is the act, depicted on the famous icon, of St. George killing the dragon that was inverted in Chekhov's story into the killing of the infant Nikifor by his greedy