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Review: Nikolai Gogol, Dead Souls, ed. George Gibian

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tionaries for Batjuškov's and Boratynskij's verse) bring the Golden Age into the Computer Age. Although Shaw describes his concordances and dictionaries as "by-product[s]" (iii) of his study of Puškin, in fact they are basic research tools for students of Russian poetry.

The Puškin concordance lists all the Cyrillic word forms used by Puškin, and not only provides their locations but also displays all the lines in which the forms occur. Lines containing Latin-alphabet words are presented in a separate table (vi).

Much of the information in the concordance can also be extracted from the *Slovar' jazyka Puškina* (AN SSSR, 1956-61). The Soviet work, however, has a number of omissions: many proper nouns, all unprintable and Latin-alphabet words, and line locations for the commonest prepositions and pronoun forms. Except for the locations of eleven especially common function words, Shaw's work fills these lacunae. In addition, of course, the format of the *Slovar'* does not permit all occurrences of a word to be displayed in context, whereas the columnar displays in the concordance are one of its most attractive features.

The concordance will be particularly helpful to students of rhyme and metrics, since its listings make clear at a glance how forms are distributed within lines. Thus, *vyšine*, on one hand, turns out to occur only in line-end position in Puškin's verse, and *glubine* occurs at line end 12 out of 16 times, whereas *gordis'*, on the other hand, occurs only line-initially, and *ljubi* occurs line-initially 13 out of 17 times. The concordance thus provides rich documentation for future studies of Puškin's poetic syntax and lexicon in relation to rhyme and meter.

The convenience of the concordance as an aid to studying the poetic structure of Puškin's verse is enhanced by Shaw's decision to display together only graphically identical forms. *Golova*, for example, is separate from *golovu*, an arrangement that permits the reader to see immediately that the two forms are distributed quite differently: *golova* occurs at line-end 11 out of 26 times, whereas *golovu* occurs at line-end only once in 35 times. Naturally, however, this strict adherence to formal criteria for grouping items has some disadvantages, particularly for studying the general linguistic as distinct from the strictly poetic aspects of the verse. It is awkward, for example, to have all occurrences of *ego* listed together, without regard for their status as possessives or as anaphoric pronouns. Similarly, one might wish to have *o* 'O' listed separately from the homographic preposition, or to have separated, for example, the genitive singular *rekí* from the nominative and accusative plural *réki*. Obviously, users of the concordance will in some instances have to break down Shaw's listings into the subclasses appropriate to their own research; in other instances, they will need to combine several listings to obtain information about words, as distinct from individual word forms.

In general, the concordance makes conveniently accessible much information that was previously available only in the much less helpful format of the *Slovar' jazyka Puškina*; in some instances, as noted above, the concordance provides information lacking in the dictionary. Thus, publication of the concordance is a major event in the development of tools for the study of Puškin's verse.

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Nikolai Gogol. *Dead Souls.* Trans. George Reavey, ed. George Gibian. N.Y.: W. W. Norton, 1985. x, 587 pp., $8.95 (paper).

George Gibian has done us all a service in collecting a wealth of interesting material toward the teaching of *Dead Souls.* If W. W. Norton had not insisted on using the Reavey translation instead of the popular favorite (Guerney's), the volume would be ideal for classroom purposes. Reavey occasionally rides roughshod (on British horses) over Gogol'-s symmetries and syntactic delights. Why not leave Gogol'-s "young" vs. "old" instead of "it could not be claimed that he was old, but he was no stripling either"? (1).

Gibian's footnotes are often helpful; they explain for example why a "letter of recommendation from Prince Khovansky" means a bribe, as well as other specifically Russian references. And doubtless one should not assume that the normal undergraduate will understand the occasional French words, though *tête-à-tête* is in Webster's college dictionary. To explain that lapwings are small birds, though, seems to me too great a concession to the potential sloth of the reader. The information that Molière was a "famous French dramatist" adds little to one's ability to make sense of a reference to him. To keep the notes to a minimum, the useful table of ranks should be relied upon and the in-text explanations eliminated.

But these are quibbles. The selection of his letters is a superb aid in understanding Gogol''s angle of creative transformation of reality. That Gogol' himself says "It was all a caricature and my own invention!" should help deflect any sociological readings. Gogol''s thoroughly reasonable desire to do something to help Russia calls into question any portrait of him as a megalomaniac and religious fanatic. That reform cannot come from an edict but rather from "an enlightened understanding of divine rather than human justice" shows Gogol''s realistic view that true reform depends on internalized "responses from below" (415).

The selection of critical works includes Robert Maguire's helpful overview of Gogol' criticism; remarks by Gogol''s contemporaries Belinskij and Herzen; essays by Gippius, Čiževsky, Šklovskij, Baxtin, Yurij Mann, Yurij Lotman, Simon Karlinsky, and Edmund Wilson; a chapter from Donald Fanger's book on Gogol'; a section of Belyj's *Masterstvo Gogolja*; the section from Nabokov's *Nikolai Gogol* on *pošlost'*. All are excellent—with the exception of Wilson's contribution, in which sexual psychology obscures the Romantic origins of the identification of beauty with evil, and gives dangerous legitimacy to the current proclivity for vulgar psychologism.

The importance of romantic aesthetics for Gogol' and its philosophical grounding in Christianity does not emerge from the critical pieces. The religious dimension, represented mainly by Čiževsky's article, is perhaps underemphasized in Gibian's selection. An interesting addition would have been Boris Uspensky's "*Samozvančestvo* or Royal Imposture in Russia as a Cultural-Historical Phenomenon" (in Ju. M. Lotman and B. A. Uspensky, *The Semiotics of Russian Culture*, 259-92. Ann Arbor: Dept. of Slavic Languages and Literatures, Univ. of Michigan, 1984.); it would have provided a means of setting Gogol''s Christian vision, so foreign to most students, in the Russian cultural context. It is a pity, for example, that Karlinsky's marvelous essay on Gogol''s "word gluttony" does not make the connection to the religious Word, as Gogol' has set the empty word in tandem with God's word throughout his *poèma*. Donald Fanger discusses Gogol''s juxtaposition of "low" colloquial language to lofty lyricism in the context of the stylistics of the time, but does not connect that observation to his remarks about the blurred distinction between living and dead, the theme of the amorphousness of Russian life, or of author as creator, to Gogol''s spiritual vision; when Fanger speaks of the road as Gogol''s "salvation" or of the "language of his soul," he means it in the secular sense. Fanger frequently refers to Terc's *V teni Gogolja*—could room have been found for an excerpt?

Finally, it would have been nice to have at least one small example of close reading, whether from Proffer's *Simile in Dead Souls*, Slonimsky's *Comic Alogism*, or elsewhere. But it is, nonetheless, wonderful to have all these good things in one place. Together with a useful chronology (to which it might have been helpful to add explicitly "The Nose," "Diary of a Madman," and "The Overcoat"), a select bibliography in English and Gogol''s frontispiece for the first edition, the Norton Critical Edition provides ample material for any English speaker to penetrate *Dead Souls* with a fresh vision.

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