

## Problems of Poetics of the Second Volume of Nikolay Gogol's "Dead Souls"

*У статті представлено монографію Н. М. Сквіри "Проблеми поетики другого тому "Мертвих душ" Миколи Гоголя". У книзі зроблена спроба цілісно-концептуального аналізу другого тому "Мертвих душ" Миколи Гоголя, досліджено такі проблеми поетики другої частини поеми, як біблійна інтертекстуальність мотивів, металогічних конструкцій і сюжетних елементів твору; художня природа характеротворення; специфіка інтер'єру, пейзажу та нова естетика художнього слова Гоголя.*

*Ключові слова: поетика, рецепція, Біблія, інтертекстуальність.*

*В статье представлена монография Н. М. Сквирсы "Проблемы поэтики второго тома Мертвых душ" Николая Гоголя". В книге сделана попытка целостно-концептуального анализа второго тома "Мертвых душ" Николая Гоголя, исследованы такие проблемы поэтики второй части поэмы, как библейская интертекстуальность мотивов, металогических конструкций и сюжетных элементов произведения; художественная природа образования характеров; специфика интерьера, пейзажа и новая эстетика художественного слова Гоголя.*

*Ключевые слова: поэтика, рецепция, Библия, интертекстуальность.*

*The monograph focuses on problems of poetics of the second volume of "Dead Souls", such as biblical intertextuality of motifs, metalogic constructions and plot components of the work, artistic nature of creation of characters, specific nature of plot-external elements of composition (interior, landscape) and new aesthetics of Gogol's diction.*

*Key words: poetics, reception, the Bible, intertextuality.*

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Biblical intertextuality is form-generating component of poetics of the second volume of "Dead Souls". The principal means of the introduction of the biblical stratum into the second part of the poem are: chronotopos symbolism, borrowing of words and phrases, citing of biblical precepts by the poem's characters, introduction of numeric words, syntactic transformations,

characters' metamorphosis in accordance with the biblical ideal, and direct insertion of Gospel images and motifs.

The author points out that Gogol imitates the biblical tradition, which is reflected in his modeling of the female characters' behavior, in their enunciations, their stand on crucial issues, their names' associations (Ulin'ka – St. Julia) and their perception of man's word. The analysis of female characters' psychological portraits as well as of their conduct, enunciations and tastes reveals the role of the women in the ideological conception of the second volume of the poem.

Comparison between details of Gogol's characters' clothes, their behavior code, inner traits and enunciations with those of biblical ones highlights associative analogies between Pavel Chichikov and Paul the Apostle, Betryshev and Solomon, Petr Pietukh and Peter the Apostle, Kostanzhoglo and John the Apostle, Khlobuyev and the prodigal son, Murazov and Jesus Christ; besides, it also permits to establish the functional nature and receptive character of these analogies, and also to describe the psychological portrayal of the characters.

The author states that systemic research and comprehensive elucidation of the operation of biblical intertext components in the second volume of "Dead Souls" as well as the establishing of the typological-genetic relationships between the two texts (i.e. the Bible and the second part of "Dead Souls") turns out to be much fruitful in studying the poetics of the latter and in establishing Gogol's "ideological program".

N. Skvira also gives a detailed account of the influence of folk tradition upon creation of the characters and realization of the ideological concept of the poem. A particular attention is paid to tracing song motifs and proverbs creatively used by Gogol in the text of the second volume of the poem, as well as to establishing their artistic functions.

The author argues that it is in the second volume that the poem's main idea, that of regeneration of "the dead souls", starts to manifest itself. For this, Gogol uses lyrical digressions, landscape descriptions and material entities.

Especially important for N. Skvira's work is the analysis of "Orthodox Church elements" of poetics of the second volume of "Dead Souls", the problem of completeness of the second part, Gogol's evolution as artist, and essential differences between the artistic systems of the first and second parts of the poem. The author states that the fabric of the second volume of "Dead Souls" is permeated with symbols of the Orthodox Church, religious holidays, biblical commandments (e.g. love for the neighbor), prayer's motif, and precepts concerning work and wealth, shaping the ways towards characters' regeneration.

Studying the problem of Gogol's burning of the second part of the poem, Skvira notes that it happened to one of the versions burned in 1845 rather than the final copy. The second volume of "Dead Souls" is not extant in full. Its five extant chapters are only an intermediate version read by Gogol to A. Smirnova in 1849.

The author maintains that the last version comprising the revised text of the four chapters, the final fifth chapter and the sequel can be considered the full yet incomplete version, as evidenced by Gogol's contemporaries who got acquainted with the supplemented text in following years [1].

The author's analysis of the poem has allowed her to establish differences between the first and the second volume, the crucial difference being the beginning of the characters' transfiguration. Skvira has also scrutinized some new elements of poetics emerging in the second volume, such as change of the milieu Chichikov gets into, a larger number of landscape descriptions, and lessening of place occupied by lyrical digressions as well as change in their semantic load. The folklore is also used there with a special purpose, emphasizing the poem's ideological and aesthetical meaning, its characters' way of life and their moral qualities, while biblical topics, emerging at the end of the first volume, become the principal form-generating element of the second's poetics. Among innovations of this volume, there are also the topic of education and introduction of the biographies of individual characters.

One of important and rather controversial issues in Gogol studies is that of the nature of his artistic talent in last years of his life. The author rejects the idea of Gogol's creative decline at the time when he wrote his last work.

The analysis of poetics of the second volume of "Dead Souls" from the viewpoint of biblical intertextuality has made it possible to reveal peculiar features of Gogol's new aesthetics, whose predominant characteristic in this volume is the stratum of biblical symbols and allegories, indicative of creative borrowings from the Bible.

### **Literature**

See also: "Объявляю также во всеуслышание, что кроме доселе напечатанного ничего не существует из моих произведений" (о рукописях и продолжениях второго тома "Мертвых душ" Николая Гоголя) // V Міжнародні Севастопольські Кирило-Мефодіївські читання : збірник наукових праць. – Севастополь : Гит пак, 2011. – С. 70–77.