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The Metonymic Structure of Pushkins's "Little Tragedies"

World literature has few parallels to the stupendous burst of Push-kinian creative genius known as the "Boldino autumn" of 1830. In the span of a mere three months (beginning of September to the end of November) Pushkin completed, according to his own testimony (letter to Pletnev dated 9.12.1830): the last two chapters of *Evgenij Onegin* ('Eugene Onegin'), *Domik v Kolomne* ('Little House in Kolomna'), *Povesti Belkina* ('Tales of Belkin'), about thirty smaller poems (many of lasting significance), and the so-called "Malen'kie tragedii" ('Little Tragedies').[1] The latter, a set of four short plays—*Skupoj rycar'* ('The Miserly Knight'), *Mocart i Sal'eri* ('Mozart and Salieri'), *Kamennyj gost'* ('The Stone Guest'), and *Pir vo vremja čumy* ('The Feast During the Plague')—was written in the incredibly brief span of two weeks, 23 October to 8 November 1830. With the exception of *The Feast During the Plague*, which was apparently started and finished during that fortnight in Boldino, Pushkin prob-ably conceived the plays four years earlier during his stay in Mixaj-lovskoe. This conception of 1826 becomes reified seriatim on 23 October, 26 October, and 4 November, respectively; *Feast* appears in completed form on 8 November. Although it is reasonably clear that Pushkin himself thought of the four plays as forming a unity of sorts (Makogonenko 1974: 161–62)—a series if not a cycle—they were never published together during his lifetime. Indeed, the very name under which they are now known, "Little Tragedies," has come down to us more by an accident of publication history than by authorial design. An illustrated title page in Pushkin's own hand has

[1] Unless designated otherwise, all translations are from Kayden (1965); line numbers of the English do not always correspond exactly to those of the orig-inal.

survived (cf. Gorodeckij 1953: facing 264), with the most prominent space being occupied by the designation "Dramatičeskie sceny" ('Dramatic Scenes') and the date 1830, below which there appear some holographic sketches relating to the content of the plays. In what seem to be subsequent additions reflecting some vacillation as to the most appropriate title for the set, the right side of the page contains (in a smaller but clearly Pushkinian hand) three further des-ignations: "Dramatičeskie očerki" ('Dramatic Sketches'), "Dramati-českie izučenija" ('Dramatic Studies'), and "Opyt dramatičeskix izučenij" ('Attempt at Dramatic Studies'). It was to the original title "Dramatičeskie sceny," however, that Pushkin reverted in 1831 when drawing up plans for a four-volume edition of his works which was never actually printed (Makogonenko 1974: 162). What pre-vailed over time nonetheless was the designation mentioned as a dis-junctive second choice in Pushkin's aforementioned letter to Pletnev (PSS 1941: 133):

> I wrote in Boldino as I haven't written in a long time. Here is what I brought with me. . . . Several dramatic scenes or little tragedies, to wit: *The Miserly Knight, Mozart and Salieri, The Feast During the Plague*, and *D. Juan*.[2]

It is a curious (but not uncharacteristic) fact of Pushkin scholar-ship that nowhere in the vast secondary literature on the "Little Tragedies" does one find a discussion of their publication history as a group. To be sure, there is no dearth of information about the dates and places of first publication of the four plays severally; but nothing, for instance, that would inform us of the first time that they were published together, either as part of a larger edition of Push-kin's works or just the four separately. This curiosity is mirrored by the history of their production on the stage (cf. Durylin 1951, Fel'dman 1975). For no easily discernible reason, technical or other-wise, it appears that the four plays have never been staged in one major production, although varying combinations of two or three out of four have achieved some prominence in the annals of Russian the-atrical history (cf. Fel'dman 1975: 212–26). These two omissions or lacunae—in Pushkin scholarship and in the history of the "Little Tragedies" on the Russian stage—are strikingly convergent. They point up a significant fact in the scholarly and theatrical *Rezeptions-*

[2] "Ja v Boldine pisal, kak davno uže ne pisal. Vot, čto ja privez. . . . Neskol'ko dramatičeskix scen ili malen'kix tragedij, imenno: *Skupoj rycar', Mocart i Sal'eri, Pir vo vremja čumy* i *D. Žuan*."

geschichte of the plays, viz., the persistent failure on the part of scholars and directors alike (not to mention the general reader and theatergoer) to perceive and to understand the *coherence* of the four "Little Tragedies" as a unity. Evidence of this long-standing and pervasive incomprehension can be descried in the general befuddlement as to the plays' generic definition (cf. Makogonenko 1974: 154–55). It is paralleled by the generally unsuccessful nature of their production on the stage despite the distinguished efforts of several generations of celebrated Russian actors (including Stanislavskij).[3] Those investigators to whom the problem of genre seems soluble are, despite a general air of confidence, hardly in agreement on precisely how to characterize the "Little Tragedies" generically. Thus while one critic (Gukovskij 1957: 298–300) sees Pushkin as having created a drama defined by a historical determinism of individual behavior, a social conditioning of universal human passions, another (Tomaševskij 1961: 517) maintains the "experimental" nature of the plays and their status as psychological studies of the development of human personality. Such characterizations have, unfortunately, contributed little to a definitive resolution of the perplexing generic problems raised by the "Little Tragedies"; an attempt to introduce a decidedly more rigorous approach to criteria of discrimination in literary typology follows.

The problem of genre is intimately bound up with the question of the unity or coherence of the "Little Tragedies" amongst themselves. As was noted earlier, Pushkin considered the plays to be four constituents of a unified whole. Further evidence of his intention is to be derived from a listing (dated 1829–30) which he made on a companion sheet to the title page described above bearing the following information (PSS 1936: 462):

   I Octaves
   II The Miser
   III Salieri
   IV D. Juan
   V Plague[4]

[3] See Durylin (1951). The lack of theatrical success has been so pronounced, in fact, as to create the general opinion that the "Little Tragedies" are closet dramas better suited to reading than to acting.
[4] I Oct(avy)
II Skupoj
III Salieri
IV D. G⟨uan⟩
V Plague [The English word appears in the original.]

If we disregard the first entry ("Octaves"), with which the plays were never subsequently associated, then this list provides a confirmation of the intended sequential order of the "Little Tragedies."[5] This fact, which has been completely overlooked in the secondary literature, becomes important beyond the exigencies of faithful adherence to authorial intention when we understand the set of four to be not just an agglomeration but a structured whole or cycle.

The idea of the unity of the "Little Tragedies" has been given much lip service but little serious consideration. With the possible exception of two short essays (Al'tman 1956 and Monter 1972), the entire bulk of commentaries and analyses has dealt with each of the plays separately, occasionally prefacing, interlarding, or concluding discussions with brief remarks about the set as a whole. This is true even in the case of monographic treatments (e.g., Konick 1964, Ustjuzanin 1974). Aside from the absence, then, of a holistic study of the plays, one also notes a fortiori the almost utter nullity of structural explorations of the "Little Tragedies." The Russian Formalists paid them scant attention except for Jakobson (1975) and Tomaševskij (1960). The same can be said of modern structuralists, although Lotman (1970: 306–13) does devote some space in his largely theoretical book to a concrete analysis of *The Stone Guest*. To the limited extent that the plays have been studied as a group— whatever the scholarly bias—there has been a marked self-confinement to an elaboration of common themes or "thematic unity"; or the purely archaeological aspect of their European models and the changes wrought by Pushkin in the process, putative or real, of adaptation. This attitude toward the artistic objects presented by the "Little Tragedies" is, of course, ultimately inimical to a definitive analysis of their literary form. For the selection of themes, while not totally arbitrary, is nonetheless at the whim of the investigator; and if the selection is unsystematic and inexhaustive (as it typically remains), then the coherence of each play separately and all four plays taken as a set cannot be made manifest. What analytical plan, then, should be followed?

In endeavoring to gain comprehensive insight into the structure of the "Little Tragedies" our main task must be the detailed accounting of the numerous patterns through which the coherence of form and content in the works is achieved. An analysis of structure must consequently be an examination of the cohesion between parts amongst themselves into wholes, in a movement which strives toward a

[5] Note that the order given here differs from that of the Pletnev letter.

telos. In an analysis of this kind the immanence of the cognitive objects in the works themselves serves simultaneously as a warrant of their inexcludability from any conceptualization of their structure and as a demand that the teleology of function informing them be delineated in all its particulars. The capriciousness attendant on a methodology which relies on the isolation of "themes" is thereby effectively avoided.

The nature of the cognitive objects whose immanence is plain but in need of explication must not be regarded as chiefly psychological but as (onto)logical, because a psychological orientation readmits the very capriciousness which the notion of immanence had banished. The exploration of literary form will find no fruitful avenue of pursuit so long as it relies on vagaries of the human psyche—unless, of course, these "vagaries" contract relations of solidarity and mutual cohesion, in which case they cease to be psychological, cease to be vagaries, and become actions motivated by logical necessity. Once literary objects or actions are said to cohere, we have eo ipso departed the realm of randomness and entered the domain of necessity. The assumption that a literary work of a certain kind possesses an internal coherence of form and content entails a search for the means specific to a given work's particular implementation of the general principles governing coherence. It is in fact the specificity of the means and the particularity of their implementation that serve to distinguish works of identical or similar form. Moreover, it is the degree to which the means can be said to implement the form that determines the goodness of fit between form and content and thereby the extent to which the functional *telos* has been achieved. Herein too lies the potential for an articulated account of the pleasurable enjoyment that a literary work offers; and a criterion for the evaluation of the work's aesthetic perfection (see further below).

The term 'cognitive object' is perhaps too imprecise for the purposes of structural analysis. The hierarchical character of the part-whole and part-part relations is more adequately reflected if we conceive of certain objects and actions as 'cognitive primes'. The latter term is to be defined as those objects which are overtly the most prominent conceptual entities in a work of literature. An adequate explication of the work's form then hinges in large part on explaining just how these 'primes' cohere amongst themselves; and on how subordinate elements of form are in alignment with them. The patterns of coherence that emerge through an analysis of this sort are a syntax: a 'logical syntax of cognitive primes'.

The logical character of the syntax transpires from the fact that

each prime is defined, just as a lexical entry might be in a dictionary. The definitions are then juxtaposed to determine their convergence or points of tangency, if any. As will become transparent below, the tangency may be mediate or immediate. In the former instance definitions of primes are tangent by transitivity; that is to say, there is some mediating concept whose definition is tangent with two primes which are otherwise not directly relatable. In the latter instance no intermediate or linking concept is required as the definitions logically have a node in common.

In practical terms, a definitional analysis of cognitive primes seeks to show *why* the elements of a literary work co-occur. It is to just such an analysis that we now proceed. In the "Little Tragedies" (as several critics have noted) there is a co-occurrence of love and death having the status of indisputable fact and thereby requiring any analysis to come to grips with it. Speaking of their copresence is tantamount to saying that love and death are contiguous. This mode of interpretation makes it at least tentatively plausible to regard them as potential metonymies of each other, since metonymy is based on the contraction of a contiguity relation (Jakobson 1971b: 90–96). What renders love and death more than just potential metonymies is a species of logical contiguity between them which issues from the very definition of each. Love is defined by two complementary relations of dominance whose substantial parameters are possession and effacement. Thus, on the one hand, love is possession of the other; on the other, it is (complementarily) effacement of self, i.e., subordination of the self to the other. Under normal (nonpathological) circumstances there is a balance struck between these two parameters which is underlaid by a reciprocal gradience: in mutual love there is a quotient of possession and effacement on both sides of the relation. Indeed, it is the complementarity of the two parameters which allows love to subsist in its nonpathological condition. For once the balance represented by the complementarity is disturbed, the relation becomes skewed in the direction of a pathological state exemplified by a number of familiar syndromes (in literature as in life).

There is a point of logical tangency implied for love and death by the above analysis, for death is the ultimate effacement of self. Naturally, it is only by taking love to its (patho)logical extreme that this tangency is achieved. What is paramount, however, is precisely their potential tangency, whose realization is approached in direct proportion to the prevalence of pathological conditions. Accordingly, the simultaneous presence of love and death becomes formally moti-

vated and internally coherent in a literary work through the concomitance of pathological cognitive objects (as are crime and disease in the "Little Tragedies"). More accurately, it is their instrumental nature, i.e., their status as metonymies vis-à-vis the result (death) to which they stand as causes, that allows them to cohere in a logical manner with the cognitive objects they are marshalled to support (love and death).

Thus, in *The Miserly Knight* there are three crimes of differing gravity and patency. In chronological order, there is first the crime of murder by poisoning suggested by the Jew Solomon; followed by the intimation (II, 48)[6] of the Baron's usury, which due to Scriptural and ecclesiastical interdictions against it becomes a crime against God as well as man. Finally there is the "crime" (rather, a transgression of the social code but considered a crime in the eyes of both the Duke and the Baron) committed by Albert against his father, namely, his acceptance of his father's challenge to a duel.[7]

In *Mozart and Salieri* the crime is the fully patent one of murder by poisoning. It should be noted (as of some importance for future discussions) that what is only suggested in the immediately antecedent play—Solomon's offer to procure phials of poison from Tobias, the pharmacist, for Albert in order that the son do away with his father, the Baron—is realized in *Mozart and Salieri*. Indeed, the poisoning of Mozart can be understood as a realized metonymy, in that the contiguity of *The Miserly Knight* is rendered manifest (exposed semiotically) by an action which represents the consummation of an earlier anticipated (albeit aborted) crime.

In *The Stone Guest*, too, crime makes its appearance, but in a somewhat more complex form. Don Juan does not transgress what could be construed as the law; indeed, in his own words (I, 20),[8] he is "no civil criminal." Yet the overwhelming force of the play's finale can only confirm us further in the contextually prompted belief that Juan has committed the crimes of profanation and blasphemy by, respectively, seducing Don Alvaro's widow and simultaneously inviting the statue of her dead husband to be present at the seduction. Whatever our ultimate interpretation of the finale (for which

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[6] "Čto mužnin dolg ona mne prinesla," ("She'd brought the money that her husband owed,"). All references are to scene and line number.

[7] The Duke as arbiter of elegance takes no special notice of either the Baron's lies or Albert's insult of calling his father a liar. In the context these are mere peccadilloes. In the eyes of the two chief protagonists, of course, each has committed or will commit (II, 89) a "crime" against the other (III, 3, 5; III, 72).

[8] "Ved' ja ne gosudarstvennyj prestupnik."

see below), its aspect of recompense for evil deeds cannot be gainsaid. Here again the realized metonymy of *The Stone Guest* vis-à-vis its immediately preceding cycle-fellow *Mozart and Salieri* should be made note of. The presence of Mozart in the eponymous play is an anticipation of the propinquity of the real-life Mozart's musical creation *Don Giovanni*, a linkage signalled by *The Stone Guest's* motto:

> *Leporello.* O statua gentilissima
> Del gran Commendatore! . . .
> . . . Ah, Padrone! (*Don Giovanni*)[9]

The metonymic relation is strengthened considerably by the identical fate—death—that the two protagonists share. This is, of course, no accident but still another structural bond defining the cohesion of the cycle.

In the closing play, *The Feast During the Plague*, the crime is that of man against God (the perfect self), viz., the celebration of death. More precisely, it is the celebration of the instrumental metonymy for death, the Plague. God is represented by yet another instrumental metonymy in the person of the Priest, with whom Walsingham does verbal battle. The first of these two metonymies is reinforced by personification. Note once more the linkage, via a realized metonymy, of the contiguous third and fourth members of the cycle. In *The Stone Guest* the Statue (dead) triumphs over Juan (alive). In *The Feast During the Plague* the celebrant of death/the Plague, Walsingham, vanquishes the defender of life/God, the Priest; but the play does not end there, as will be explained below.

Also in a metonymic relation to death, hence well motivated structurally in the "Little Tragedies," is disease. Albert in *The Miserly Knight* perceives (I, 37–38)[10] with characteristic perspicacity that "it is not difficult to become infected with miserliness living under one roof with my father." The Baron himself observes (II, 63–66)[11] that his heart is "constricted by some unknown feeling," adding

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[9] The words are from act II, scene 14. Many editions (especially Soviet) continue to print this little motto with a mistaken apostrophe after *gran.* To be sure, this faithfully represents (cf. PSS 1948: 307) the manuscript version. However, that version also demonstrates Pushkin's less than perfect Italian, since it mangles *Commendatore* and misspells *Giovanni.* (Unfortunately, the definitive Academy edition (PSS 1948) has also misprinted *gentilissima.*)

[10] "Zarazit'sja zdes' ne trudno eju/ Pod krovleju odnoj s moim otcom."

[11] "No serdce mne tesnit / Kakoe-to nevedomoe čuvstvo. . . . / Nas uverjajut mediki: est' ljudi, / V ubijstve naxodjaščie prijatnost'."

that "medical men claim that there are people who find pleasure in murder." He thereupon likens his own mixed feelings of pleasure and fear (dread) when inserting a key in a lock to those of a murderer when plunging a knife into his victim. And in the final scene the Duke calls the Baron a "madman" (III, 93)[12] for challenging his own son to a duel. Nor should it be overlooked that the Baron dies (presumably) from a heart attack brought on by overexcitement; which can be linked to his own earlier observation (II, 59–60, 63–64)[13] about the effect on his heart of the mere anticipation (NB: a metonymy) of opening his chests full of gold.

In order to understand the formal coherence of the "Little Tragedies" on this point we must incorporate the not uncommon notion of passion as disease into our analysis. The Baron's monologue, which spans the whole of scene II, furnishes us with ample evidence (implicit as well as explicit) that he is a man possessed by a passion he himself characterizes (II, 60)[14] as "fever and trembling," i.e., in terms akin to if not identical with pathological symptoms; cf. the later reference (II, 65) to *mediki* 'doctors'. Having thus qualified passion as a species of disease on internal grounds, we can better discern the cyclic progression of the plays. The miserliness which is at once disease and passion in the first play is mirrored in Salieri's envy in the second. Indeed, the protagonist himself speaks of it (I, 60)[15] as the cause of his *suffering*. Moreover, Salieri's tearful reaction (II, 52–58)[16] to Mozart's playing of his *Requiem* after the poison has been administered contains expressions (63–65)[17] almost completely identical to

the Baron's description of his own symptoms. In both passages there is talk of mixed emotions—"pleasure/fear" in the Baron's case, "pain/pleasure" in Salieri's—and of a knife as the instrument whose (criminal and therapeutic) use these emotions accompany. Although the Baron does not recognize its use as curative, Salieri does by calling the knife just that (*celebnyj*) and likening the ensuing relief to that obtained by the severance of a "suffering member" (*stradavšij člen*). The tears that he shed are of a totally new sort (II, 52–53: *Èti slezy/ Vpervye l'ju: i bol'no i prijatno* 'These tears/ I shed for the first time: it is both painful and pleasureful') and are redolent in their novelty of the strange sensations described by the Baron. In both cases the relief is not devoid of an admixture of lingering pain or dread.

The nexus of cognitive primes which informs *Mozart and Salieri* is so crystalline in meaning and so overwhelming in purport for all four plays as to demand special examination. The binomial *genij i zlodejstvo* 'genius and villainy', first introduced by Mozart at II, 44–5[18] and echoed by Salieri in his crucial monologue at II, 71–2,[19] is asserted to be composed of incompatible constituents. Yet Mozart's statement has a platitudinous ring; and Salieri mouths it only to refute it (more accurately, to cast doubt on it).

A definitional analysis shows, however, that genius and villainy have points of tangency. Genius can be defined as the embodiment or attainment of perfection. In turn, perfection—whatever its positive properties—necessarily involves the cessation of dynamism (life). Anything which is dynamic remains fundamentally *in statu nascendi*, i.e., has not attained its terminal point. Indeed, insofar as human beings are concerned, the verity of the apothegm *errare humanum est* resides precisely in the incompatibility of being alive and simultaneously free of any imperfection. On the other hand, perfection can only be conceived as an end point, that beyond which there is nothing (better). On this analysis, in other words, there is the necessary involvement of some element of death in perfection, specifically the absence of dynamism. This condition would extend, therefore, to genius as well. Villainy, or crime, bears an instrumental relation to death when the former is the cause of or strives to bring

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[12] "Molčite: ty, bezumec!"

[13] "Ja každyj raz, kogda xoču sunduk / Moj otperet', vpadaju v žar i trepet." ("Each night I come here to unlock my chest, / I feel all hot with trembling and with fear."); "No serdce mne tesnit / Kakoe-to nevedomoe čuvstvo . . ." ("Still a strange sensation / Hovers mysteriously and grips my heart . . .")

[14] "Vpadaju v žar i trepet."

[15] "Mučitel'no zaviduju. —O nebo!" ("I envy deeply, to agony . . . O heavens!")

[16] "Èti slezy / Vpervye l'ju: i bol'no i prijatno / Kak budto tjažkij soveršil ja dolg, / Kak budto nož celebnyj mne otsek / Stradavšij člen! drug Mocart, èti slezy. . . . / Ne zamečaj ix. Prodolžaj, speši / Ešče napolnit' zvukami mne dušu." ("The tears I weep / Are sweet and bitter, tears I've never wept. / Mozart, I feel a healing-knife has cut from me / Some lacerated member. Mind them not,/ My tears, but play again, I beg you, play! / Fill all my soul with sound and airs divine.")

[17] "Vse predalis' by vol'nomu iskusstvu. / Nas malo izbrannyx, sčastlivcev prazdnyx, / Prenebregajuščix prezrennoj pol'zoj." ("We need, in free surrender gain, like priests. / But few are chosen. Few are the happy idlers, / Indifferent to private gain, like priests.")

[18] "On že genij, / Kak ty, da ja. A genij i zlodejstvo, / Dve vešči nesovmestnye." ("He was a genius just like you and me. / Genius and crime are incompatible.")

[19] "I ja ne genij? Genij i zlodejstvo / Dve vešči nesovmestnye." ("I am no genius? And genius and crime / Are worlds apart?")

about the latter. We are confronted once again by a metonymic relation.

Mozart's death, then, can be thought of as a realized metonymy (despite its presumed occurrence beyond the end of the play). Within the brief confines of Pushkin's little tragedy, Mozart lives by transcending his own genius. This is conveyed via repeated oblique references to Mozart's humanity (= mortality?). There is first of all the markedly colloquial and casual character of Mozart's diction, which is underscored further by juxtaposition to Salieri's grandiloquence and bookishness. This concerns syntax as well as lexicon. Then there is Mozart's insouciant attitude toward music in general and his own in particular, which stands in sharp contrast to Salieri's piety and solemnity (cf. I, 89 to I, 110).[20] The very lightheartedness and levity which allow Mozart to interest himself in the scratchings of a tavern fiddler while in the midst of completing a serious and profound composition cause Salieri to exclaim in bemusement and disgust: "You, Mozart, are unworthy of yourself") I, 105).[21] The contrast in attitude is epitomized at I, 108–10:

> *Salieri*. You, Mozart, are a god and don't know that
>   yourself;
> I know, I.
> *Mozart*. Pshaw! Really? Perhaps . . .
> But my godliness is famished [translation mine].[22]

The word play hinges on a derivational metonymy, *bog/božestvo* 'God/godliness', which is weakened in translation (113–15) Mozart says something which can only be motivated by the function of underscoring the great genius' concomitant humanity:

> *Mozart*. I'm glad. But let me go home and tell
> My wife that she should not
> Wait dinner for me [translation mine].[23]

Mozart's concern for his responsibilities as a husband are matched at II, 15–16 by his attention to his duties as a father:

[20] "Net—tak; bezdelicu." ("Nothing! a trifle only."); "No božestvo moe progolodalos'." ("However, the god in me is getting hungry.")

[21] "Ty, Mocart, nedostoin sam sebja."

[22] *Sal'eri*: "Ty, Mocart, bog, i sam togo ne znaeš'; / Ja znaju, ja." *Mocart*: "Ba! pravo? možet byt' . . . / No božestvo moe progolodalos'."

[23] *Mocart*: "Ja rad. No daj, sxožu domoj, skazat' / Zene, čtoby menja ona k obedu / Ne dožidalas'."

> *Mozart*. On the third day I was playing on the floor
> With my little boy. I was called [translation mine].[24]

All of the above quotations contribute toward fulfilling the same function, viz., the transcendence of the stasis of perfection. This is achieved by limning aspects of Mozart's persona that render his portrait quintessentially and appealingly human.

The discussion of chapter 7, which touched on the relation between metonymy and negation, now needs to be expanded considerably, specifically as it concerns the "Little Tragedies." I start by stressing the pivotal role of negation in definition. To echo Spinoza: *omnis determinatio est negatio*. Moreover, negation is quite possibly the ultimate or quintessential metonymy, since its participation determines identity and distinctness. While conceding that relations (of whatever kind) belong to the realm of mind, one can nonetheless assert with some confidence that of all relations negation is the purest form of cognition. This remits us to Spinoza's apothegm, the purport of which cannot but have a significant impact on the very foundations of epistemology. Indeed, the connection between negation and the theory of knowledge, it will be seen, turns out to be the mainspring of the structure of the "Little Tragedies."

The crucial relevance of negation to the structural understanding of two key rhetorical modes, irony and paradox, needs to be underscored. In irony, the interpreted meaning of an utterance is at variance with—i.e., is *not*—the meaning of that utterance in a discursive (neutral) context. In paradox, there is a simultaneous presence of contradictory qualities or aspects; that is to say something is *not* what it appears nevertheless to be. To be sure, all figures must display a strong negational component in order to subsist as such. However, it is just in irony and paradox (and oxymoron; see below) that the functional load of negation predominates over that of other components.

The same is to be discerned in the structure of certain concepts, which—true to form—are among the inventory of cognitive primes in the "Little Tragedies." Thus, to take a cardinal example, illusion is defined as the state resulting from an inability to discriminate truth from fiction. The negational component of illusion is encapsulated, then, in the failure to perceive that something is *not* what it appears. Similarly, to take a second crucial example, doubt

[24] *Mocart*: "Na tretij den' igral ja na polu / S moim mal'čiškoj. Kliknuli menja."

requires negation as an inalienable constituent of its proper definition, viz., *not* being certain about the truth of a statement or the reality of an event.

The evidence for negation as the informing principle (dominant) of the structure of the "Little Tragedies" is numerous and multiform. To begin on the level of externalia, there is the curious matter of the plays' locale. Each of them is set outside Russia; furthermore, their precise locus and historical time is not clearly indicated. This circumstance has caused critics (e.g., Gukovskij 1957: 298–326) to read all sorts of historical subtexts into the plays and to ascribe aims to Pushkin that (even if true) could have no bearing on the structure whatsoever. However, the foreign setting and the vague historicity of the "Little Tragedies" are in complete consonance with the metonymic dominant which permeates them. The important thing here is that the locale is *not* Russia; and that the time is *not* any specific, identifiable time.

In precisely the same manner, *The Miserly Knight* is *not* a translation of a "tragicomedy by William Shenstone," despite Pushkin's subtitle. This deliberate mystification—there is no such piece by Shenstone—is simply a functional consequence (admittedly, a trivial one) of the metonymic dominant and not an attempt to mask Pushkin's well-known skirmishes with his father over money (*pace* Lapkina 1961: 157, et al.). What is more, Pushkin's Baron is not the typical or conventional miser, echoes of Molière's Harpagon (Tomaševskij 1960) notwithstanding. In the case of *Mozart and Salieri* there is a notation "translated from the German" on a sheet containing a list of planned dramatic pieces written in Pushkin's hand which was made after the plays had been completed (Ustjužanin 1974: 21). Since no manuscript of the play has survived, there is at least room for doubt as to whether Pushkin intended this notation to stand or not (the earliest published versions of 1831 and 1832 lack it). The point here, however, is that the play is not a translation at all. Nor is Mozart the chief protagonist despite the order of names in the title. Again, one is led to believe (as were Russian readers of the time; cf. Ustjužanin 1974: 21) that *The Stone Guest* could be a translation of some Spanish original, perhaps even of Tirso de Molina's *El Burlador de Sevilla y Convidado de piedra* (ca. 1620), which initiated the extended series of literary works on the Don Juan legend. Of course, in verification of the pattern set by its predecessors, Pushkin's play is not a translation at all, although a number of passages parallel those of Molière's *Don Juan, ou le Festin de Pierre* (Tomaševskij 1960: 291ff.). Nor is Pushkin's version of the legend

like any other, not even that of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, with which it has obvious affinities (PSS 1935: 564–70). Of primary importance in this regard is the figure of Juan himself. He is, indeed, *not* the Don Juan of legend (cf. Gukasova 1973: 103–105). Several important details have been changed. Donna Anna is Don Alvaro's wife, not his daughter. The Statue is invited not to dinner but to stand guard during the love act. Finally, while *The Feast During the Plague* comes cloest to being a translation (subtitle: "From [John] Wilson's tragedy *The City of the Plague*"), it is clearly quite different from it in certain crucial respects, being on the whole, rather, an adaptation of one scene (act I, scene 4) with significant alterations and additions (PSS 1935: 580ff.).

The contiguity relation which underpins metonymy manifests itself repeatedly through a cognitive condition in the "Little Tragedies" that might best be termed "vergency." This is defined as a state of mind one stage short of a conclusive goal, an anticipation of the goal or a verging on it. The goal is in turn a state from which there is no retreating—such as madness or death. Indeed, the anticipation of death suffuses all four plays. The Baron awaits it with a fear conditioned less by death itself than by the consequences his demise would have for the disposition of his wealth. In an important sense the very accumulation of this wealth has had the aim of cheating death or circumventing it. The Baron will "live on" through his money. Money, after all, transcends even death. The Baron's understanding of immortality is embedded in his desire to be contiguous to the gold even in death (II, 115–18).[25] The linkage between money and death is deepened via the character of Solomon. He is a moneylender who suggests to Albert how to hasten the Baron's death. The thought of his father's dying has obviously not been far from the forefront of Albert's consciousness all along (cf. I, 85).[26] Indeed, in the final scene Albert becomes willy-nilly the proximate cause if not the instrument of his father's death. The Baron's dying words (III, 102–103),[27] "Where are my keys? My keys, my keys! . . ." cry out for his money via a metonymy. Albert's famous ironic line, uttered after

[25] "Ja skryt' podval! o, esli b iz mogily / Pridti ja mog, storoževoju ten'ju / Sidet' na sunduke i ot živyx / Sokroviš̌ča moi xranit' kak nyne! . . ." ("Oh, that I might conceal this vaulted chamber / From shameful eyes and from my grave arise, / And like a watchful shade come here to brood / Above my chests, and from all men defend / My treasures, even as I protect them now! . . .")

[26] "Užel' otec menja perežit'?" ("You mean to say my father might outlive me?")

[27] "Gde ključi?/ Ključi, ključi moi! . . ."

his father has thrown down the gauntlet (III, 89),[28] is in fact an unwitting anticipation of the real "gift" (his inheritance) he will receive after the Baron's death—a premature demise hastened by Albert's unexpected intrusion into the Duke's presence from an adjoining room and the ensuing exchange of insults between father and son.

The anticipation of death becomes more acute with the advent of *Mozart and Salieri*. Both protagonists have thoughts about death, but Mozart's are clearly not at the level of consciousness. They are, what is more, invariably contiguous to his own music—a metonymy for the composer. In I, 100,[29] Mozart explains the composition of a new piece (dismissed as a bagatelle) in programmatic terms which include mention of a "funerary apparition" (*viden'e grobovoe*). This anticipates the playing of the *Requiem* in scene II immediately following upon the dropping of poison into Mozart's glass by Salieri. The latter act is, notably, itself preceded by Mozart's retailing (II, 9–21)[30] of the curious circumstances surrounding the commissioning of his *Requiem*. A "man dressed in black" comes three times to Mozart's house and only finds him in on the third try, at which time he commissions the *Requiem*. Mozart admits to being totally preoccupied with his mysterious visitor. "My black man gives me no peace, day or night. He hurries after me like a shadow wherever I go. Even now it seems to me that he sits with us in a threesome" (II, 26–30):

Mocart. Mne den' i noč' pokoja ne daet
Moj černyj čelovek. Za mnoju vsjudu

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[28] "Blagodarju. Vot pervyj dar otca." ("I thank you. This, my father's first real gift.")

[29] "Ja vesel . . . Vdrug: viden'e grobovoe," ("I'm happy . . . All at once—visions of gloom and death,")

[30] "Tak slušaj. / Nedeli tri tomu, prišel ja pozdno / Domoj. Skazali mne, čto zaxodil / Za mnoju kto-to. Otčego—ne znaju, / Vsju noč' ja dumal: kto by èto byl? / I čto emu vo mne? Nazavtra tot že / Zašel i ne zastal opjat' menja. / Na tretij den' igral ja na polu / S moim mal'čiškoj. Kliknuli menja; / Ja vyšel. Čelovek, odetyj v černom, / Učtivo poklonivšis', zakazal/ Mne Requiem i skrylsja. Sel ja totčas / I stal pisat'—i s toj pory za mnoju / Ne prixodil moj černyj čelovek;" ("Then listen now. / One night, about three weeks ago, I came / Home late. They told me someone had been there / To see me. I lay all night, I know not why, / Wondering who the caller was, and what / His errand. Then he came a second time. / The following day, when I was playing games / Down on the carpet with my little son, / I heard a voice outside. A tall old man/ In black, with courtly bows, commissioned me / To write a requiem, and disappeared. / I set to work at once, but since that day / My visitor in black has never called.")

Kak ten' on gonitsja. Vot i teper'
Mne kažetsja, on s nami sam-tretej
Sidit.

Salieri too has been anticipating death, but his is a premeditated and overt plotting of the murder of his friend. Secondarily, Salieri recalls occasional bouts with *tedium vitae* leading to thoughts of suicide, but it is Mozart's death that the gift of poison from his beloved Izora will now be used to bring about.

In *The Stone Guest* death is present in two senses, one of which realizes the all but explicit situation at the conclusion of *Mozart and Salieri*. First, the Statue, the replica of the dead Commander, stands as a representation of a past death—a murder, de facto if not de jure (cf. I, 20).[31] Second, as was already argued at some length, the Don pursues death, courts it, and thereby constantly anticipates it, protesting all the while that killing is forced on him by circumstance (II, 99–100, III, 1–3).[32] The appearance of the Statue at the end of the play is, in the light of Juan's pursuit, a realized metonymy.

From as early a date as that of Belinskij's essays (1958: 555–63)—i.e., 1846—the "Little Tragedies" have been regarded singly and jointly by generations of critics of the most diverse persuasions as masterpieces. Perhaps the most successful expression of this collective judgment is contained in the following remarks of A. L. Bem (1937: 92–93):

A maximal austerity of action, a renunciation of all episodic elements, a concentration of attention on two–three dramatis personae, a linguistic compactness and precision, a pervasiveness of governing ideas coupled with the total absence of all moralization or philosophizing, the concentrated tension of a dominant passion—all this makes the "Little Tragedies" genuine masterpieces of world literature [translation mine].[33]

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[31] "Ved' ja ne gosudarstvennyj prestupnik." ("My crime was not against the sovereign State!")

[32] "Dosadno, pravo. Večnye prokazy— / A vsë ne vinovat . . . Otkuda ty?" ("You're always up to pranks, and always not / At fault. But tell me where you come from now?"); "Vsë k lučšemu: nečajanno ubiv / Don Karlosa, otšel'nikom smirennym / Ja skrylsja zdes'." ("It's worked out well! Since having slain by chance / Don Carlos, I've taken refuge here, concealed.")

[33] "Predel'naja skupost' dejstvija, otkaz ot vsego, čto javljaetsja èpizodičeskim, sosredotočenie vnimanija na dvux-trex dejstvujuščix licax, slovesnaja sžatost' i četkost', pronizannost' rukovodjaščej ideej, no polnoe otsutstvie vsjakogo moralizirovanija ili filosofstvovanija, sguščennaja naprjažennost' dominirujuščej

The more laconic and hence more forceful characterization of D. D. Blagoj (1967: 579) echoes these sentiments: "The "Little Tragedies" . . . are one of the greatest wonders of world verbal art [translation mine]."[34]

Whenever a piece of literature enjoys such unmitigated acclaim, it becomes imperative that an explanation be attempted, for the ingredients which contribute to the status of a given work as a masterpiece need to be exposed in any definitive analysis. Moreover, with respect to the narrower tasks of literary investigation, theoretical and historical, the question of just what constitutes a masterpiece needs to be posed with particular urgency.

The answer cannot be simple or univocal. Nevertheless, one part may be inferred from the foregoing analysis of Pushkin's "Little Tragedies" and merits delineation. We saw that the four plays were governed in structure by an overarching formal principle—that of metonymy—whose main variant for the material at hand turned out to be negation. We observed at the same time that this governing principle, or dominant, was implemented by a remarkably rich panoply of substantive means, viz., the actions and objects of the plays down to the minutiae of character, plot, subsidiary construction, and externalia.

There is thus a fundamental asymmetry between form and content in that just one or a small set of formal principles is implemented by a multifarious content. The intricacy and skill (including diction) with which the means of the content/substance are utilized as the overt expression of the form is clearly contributory to the organic success of the work as literature. The unity or coherence which the work evinces hinges on the immanence of certain (relatively few) principles in the matrix of a manifold content. The goodness of fit which obtains in a masterpiece between form and substance emanates, on this analysis, from the relation of maximal complementarity between the two.

A most intriguing question impinging on the analysis of structure is that of the genre of the "Little Tragedies." The difficulties of interpretation experienced by actors and directors are in no small measure attributable to an inability to decide the generic question. From the standpoint of subsequent Russian literary history the

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strasti—vse èto delaet "Malen'kie tragedii" podlinnymi šedevrami mirovoj literatury."

[34] "Malen'kie tragedii . . . odno iz veličajšix čudes mirovogo iskusstva slova."

"Little Tragedies" have no successors and thus occupy a unique place. I assume that this status must in part be conditioned by the plays' generic peculiarity.

A perspicacious contemporary critic (Solov'ev 1974: 146) has provided us with some remarks suggestive of a solution to the problem of genre. He notes that the period of productivity denoted by the appellation "Boldino autumn" includes the completion, in addition to the "Little Tragedies," of three "antiworks": the two narrative poems *Graf Nulin* ('Count Nulin') and *Domik v Kolomne* ('Little House in Kolomna') and the novel-in-verse *Evgenij Onegin* ('Eugene Onegin'). They are "antiworks" because, respectively, the first contains an antihero (Nulin), the second is an "antipoem" (*antipoèma*), and the last is an antinovel. Solov'ev thereby characterizes the "Little Tragedies" as antidramas in alignment with what he perceives to be Pushkin's pervasive "generic polemicity" in 1830.

The notion of an antidrama obviously comports very well with the thema of negation. From a typological viewpoint, however, the "Little Tragedies" can be given a much more precise definition, and this can be achieved if a general framework is drawn up which can facilitate a comparison between Pushkin's plays and drama of the more quotidian type. Logically speaking there are three fundamental types of drama with respect to the feature of development: static, dynamic, and what I will call culminative. The static type is characterized by an unremitting simultaneity of action, of the kind that is usually associated with classicism. The dynamic type is in turn defined by a propulsive successivity of action, of the kind favored by romanticism. Finally, the culminative type, under which the "Little Tragedies" are to be subsumed, is the product of the amalgamation of the first two while maintaining its own distinctness. It is static in focusing on one subject and having just a few scenes; it is dynamic in encapsulating a series of actions which are referred to by implication or through a purely verbal recapitulation. Most importantly, moreover, the culminative type differs from the static and dynamic by taking only the culmination of an inferable longer play at a point of maximal tension and minimal distance from denouement or resolution, and concentrating exclusively on this developmental apogee. The third type is, I would assert, to be associated with the realistic mode.

As a number of commentators have noted (cf. Konick 1964: 41ff.), the "Little Tragedies" appear to be fragments, pieces plucked out of some larger text. Èjxenbaum (1937: 8) is very revealing on this point:

The problem of producing Pushkin's "Little Tragedies" is first and foremost one of *genre*. The "Little Tragedies" are opposed to the usual dramatic and theatrical genres as a refutation in principle. These pieces are written deliberately and consciously as stage fragments or outlines—austerely, laconically, without a development of the plot along several lines, without the traditional pitting against each other of different situations, without collateral or secondary themes. All hinges on the weighty and taut poetic word. These [plays] are some sort of illustrations for detailed texts which underlie them and are presupposed by them . . . This creates the impression of a polemic about principles with dramaturgy and the theatre. After all Pushkin wrote so briefly not because he didn't know how to write at greater length! [translation mine][35]

The *pars pro toto*, hence metonymic, character of the plays is, indeed, the distinctive feature of the genre. It is, notably, not just any *pars* that is marshaled to stand for the adumbrated *totum*: it is the climax or culmination, the structurally most important part. Invoking Jakobson's association (1971b: 255ff.) of realism with the predominance of metonymy, I am impelled to categorize the "Little Tragedies" accordingly as realistic.

The term culmination has to be understood in a rather broad sense because not all four plays are equal in their degree of climactic intensity. *The Miserly Knight* and *The Stone Guest* both build up to a *peripeteia*, but *Mozart and Salieri*, despite a marked climax, nevertheless ends with an anticlimax whose main motif is doubt (the absence of certain knowledge). And *The Feast During the Plague* is pure anticlimax: the most important content is rendered not by any line a character speaks but, remarkably, by the final stage direction (but cf. the close of *Boris Godunov*), "The Presider remains immersed in a deep pensiveness" (*Predsedatel' ostaetsja pogruž-*

[35] "Vopros o postanovke "Malen'kix tragedij" Puškina—vopros prežde vsego i glavnym obrazom *žanrovyj*. "Malen'kie tragedii" protivostojat obyčnym dramaturgičeskim i teatral'nym žanram kak principial'noe vozraženie. Èti vešči napisany namerenno i soznatel'no kak sceničeskie fragmenty ili očerki—skupo, lakonično, bez razvertyvanija sjužeta po raznym linijam, bez tradicionnogo obygryvanija otdel'nyx položenij, bez pobočnyx i vtorostepennyx tem. Vse deržitsja na polnovesnom naprjažennom stixovom slove. Èto kakie-to sceničeskie illjustracii k stojaščim za nimi i imi podrazumevaemym podrobnym tekstam . . . Èto proizvodit vpečatlenie principial'noj polemiki s dramaturgiej i s teatrom. Ved' ne potomu že napisal Puškin tak korotko, čto on ne sumel napisat' podrobnee!"

ennyj v glubokuju zadumčivost'). *The Feast* is suffused with references to an antecedent climax and contains no development whatever within itself. It is formally an "extended oxymoron" (Monter 1972: 212), a structural paradox. Whereas the first three plays all mount a condensed development within their brief limits (while implying a second and much larger one precedent to the first), *The Feast* casts only a penumbra of progression or climax—effectively, indeed, the "zero degree" of both.

In a discussion of Aristotle's *Poetics* William K. Wimsatt (1966: 86–87) suggests the following summary of its thrust:

Aristotle seems to intend this meaning: that the ideal poetry is drama. That the ideal drama is tragedy. That the ideal tragedy is that having a complex plot (that is, a *peripeteia* or sharp reversal and an *anagnorisis*).

It is clear that with respect to the two features defining a complex plot in Aristotelian terms *The Miserly Knight* and *The Stone Guest* contrast jointly with *Mozart and Salieri* and *The Feast During the Plague*. The first pair displays a peripeteia and an (attenuated) anagnorisis (the Baron's discovery of Philip's eavesdropping; Don Juan's recognition of the statue-come-to-life). The second displays neither. If we add development as a feature in accordance with our analysis of genre and assay the four plays against it, we find that *The Stone Guest* is the only one with a marked progression. Using a feature matrix to capture all of the foregoing information (where plusses denote the presence and minusses the absence of the feature in question, and parentheses signify an attenuated value for the feature), we obtain the following picture:

	DVLPT	ANAGN	PERIP
I MK	−	(+)	+
II MS	(−)	−	−
III SG	+	(+)	+
IV FP	−	−	−

On the above analysis, *Mozart and Salieri* and *The Feast During the Plague* differ only in that the former has generally a rudimentary development; and a somewhat more palpable one relative specifi-

cally to the latter, which displays practically none. The braces connecting contiguous plays in a non-pairwise manner show that while I and II are linked directly, III is the counterpart of I and II taken jointly, just as IV is the counterpart of I, II, and III taken together. What this means—and here we approach systematically the problem of the cycle—is that there is a thesis/antithesis relation between each of the serially bracketed plays-by-features proceeding from start to finish through the set. II has an oppositely valued feature matrix vis-à-vis I. III is in the same relation to I and II; moreover, the oppositiveness is greater between III and II than between III and I. Similarly, IV is the antithesis of all three preceding plays but is maximally opposed to III. The movement described by these degrees of opposedness is undulatory (sinusoidal), with the additional factor of gradience between separate peaks and valleys: the drop from the plenitude of *The Stone Guest* to the austerity of *The Feast During the Plague* is maximally precipitate, followed in amplitude by those of I and II to III and I to II.

A cycle as used in a literary context normally has the meaning of a series of works clustered around a uniting "theme" or a leading personage. In relation to the "Little Tragedies," however, the notion of cycle which the plays seem intuitively to implement so naturally and adequately must be modified significantly in order to discern its role in the structure with optimal clarity. This modification revolves around the enigmatic *Feast*. I should like to argue that it must be viewed as a coda (in a sense most closely akin to the musical usage) vis-à-vis its predecessors in the cycle. This contention, it must be realized, entails two inseparable corollaries. First, coming as it does at the end of a series the coda is in a marked or prominent position relative to the preceding members; and this factor introduces the structural property of asymmetry or hierarchy into the form of the whole. Second and also directly in consequence of its position, the coda assumes a recapitulative or integrative function. This has the effect simultaneously of revealing the inner cohesion between all members of the unity and subordinating its predecessors by transcending or superseding them. Qua coda, *The Feast During the Plague* simultaneously embraces the other three plays by deliberately and patently inverting the life-over-death hierarchy, in conclusive replication of the death endings of its predecessors. The implied negation of life via a celebration of death is definitional in purport (cf. Spinoza's *sententia*). The pointedly suspended final stage direction is thus a typical feature of the coda, viz., a reprise—here of the

leading element of the "Little Tragedies" cognitive content, doubt and self-delusion.

The peculiar kind of cognitive conflation exhibited by the Baron, Salieri, Don Juan, and Walsingham appears to be related in form to a well-known neurological deficit, aphasia, which involves the impairment of the linguistic capacity. In several pioneering studies, Roman Jakobson has shown that there are two fundamental types of aphasia which he has termed 'similarity disorder' and 'contiguity disorder' and linked with the two basic species of trope, metaphor and metonymy (1971b: 244–55). As defined by Jakobson (1971b: 245):

> We distinguish two basic types of aphasia—depending on whether the major deficiency lies in selection and substitution, with relative stability of combination and contexture; or conversely, in combination and contexture, with relative retention of normal selection and substitution.

He goes on to say (1971b: 254):

> The relation of similarity is suppressed in [similarity disorder], the relation of contiguity in [contiguity disorder]. . . . Metaphor is alien to the similarity disorder, and metonymy to the contiguity disorder.

Given the overwhelming preponderance of metonymic relations in the immanent structure of the "Little Tragedies" and, more specifically, in the cognitive structure of the protagonists' behavior, it is instructive to learn further that "for an aphasic with impaired substitution and intact contexture, operations involving similarity yield to those based on contiguity" (1971b: 249). I am tempted, therefore, to label the actions of the four chief protagonists as symptomatic of a "cognitive similarity disorder." Obviously this is at best a suggestive parallel, and no case for the presence or relevance of aphasia in the "Little Tragedies" could be made.

We should pursue nevertheless the question of the incidence of disturbed or quasi-pathological heroes in the plays. The key here as before may be Spinoza's dictum. Just as psychoanalysis leans heavily on the exploration of psychological aberrancy in its quest for a definition of the mental norm, so in the "Little Tragedies" Pushkin exploits illusion as a heuristic means for defining human knowledge through human personality. The outlines of mental pathology (nonhealth) are used to define sanity (health). By laying bare the structure of the mind, Pushkin has revealed the structure of the world.

But does not our knowledge of the world, after all, extend no further than our knowledge of mind? Mind is a metonymy for world. In the "Little Tragedies," that unique quintessence of cerebral drama, Pushkin's lofty intellect, incomparable poetic imagination, and consummate mastery of diction have fused into monuments of genius.

9

Gogol's Tropological Vision

The apocryphal statement attributed to Dostoevsky about all subsequent Russian writers having emerged "from under Gogol's *Overcoat*" was developed at length by Apollon Grigor'ev and thus entered the treasure house of aphorisms about Russian literature. Far more accurate is Rozanov's comment on this ([1906] 1970: 15):

> The view is known according to which all of our newest literature derives from Gogol: it would be more correct to say that it appeared in all of its entirety as a negation of Gogol, as a struggle against him.

Rozanov goes on to perceive the fundamental difference between Gogol and his successors, which he identifies as their ability to chart the deepest recesses and subtlest movements of the human soul. Gogol's distinctive feature, that which uniquely sets him apart from Dostoevsky, Tolstoj, Turgenev, Goncharov, and the rest, is an absence: the studied refusal to go beyond the externalia of the material and the corporeal to the inner sancta of the human psyche. "His most important work he called *Dead Souls* and beyond all foresight expressed in this title the great secret of his creativity and, of course, himself as well" (Rozanov, 16). The magic of Gogol's genius resides, according to Rozanov, in his ability to transcend this absence by endowing purely external forms with such vitality and plasticity that "nobody noticed that there is nothing in essence behind these forms, no soul nor person who would bear them" (ibid.).

The polysemy of the title is occasionally thematized directly. In chapter 3 of volume 2, Koshkarev reads from a report on Chichikov which complains that Chichikov "has made no great progress in the rhetorical [*slovesnye*] sciences, inasmuch as he expressed himself

its being interpreted as a sign. It may simply serve to identify the object and *assure us of its existence and presence* (4.447 [emphasis added]).

The role of Secondness, of "brutal force," and a forcible appeal to our attention are all embodied by the index—of which a statue is a particularly apposite example.

The nature of the factual connection contracted by the index with its object tends to "make the mean suggest what is meant" (NE 4: 242); characters or features of the object are brought thereby to the level of consciousness affording "evidence from which the positive assurance as to truth of fact may be drawn" (4.447). While Peirce himself resorts here (as elsewhere) to photographs as prime examples of indexes incorporating icons, the example of religious statuary is no less fitting. Indeed, in the progression from term to proposition to argument which Peirce adduces in parallel to icon, index, and symbol (e.g., NE 4: 241–44) an index which "forces something to be an *icon* . . . or which forces us to regard it as an *icon* . . . does make an assertion, and forms a *proposition*" (NE 4: 242).

With respect to the all-important time axis and the diachronic development of signs (their power of growth), only symbols have a teleological *esse in futuro*. Hence:

> The mode of being of the symbol is different from that of the icon and that of the index. An icon has such being as belongs to past experience. It exists only as an image in the mind. An index has the being of present experience. The being of a symbol consists in the real fact that something surely will be experienced if certain conditions be satisfied. Namely, it will influence the thought and conduct of its interpreter (4.447).

While conceding that "the most perfect of signs are those in which the iconic, indicative, and symbolic characters are blended as equally as possible" (4.448), we ought also to recognize that this sort of sign is practically confined to objects of mathematical thought. In myth, as in all forms of natural human semeiosis, there is an inherent *asymmetry* between the elements of a sign. Indeed, the symbolic invariably predominates in the long run, for only the symbol, by virtue of its being distinguished as a sign which determines its interpretant, has "the power . . . to cause a real fact" (NE 4: 260). In the case of myth, that "real fact" is "thought and conduct" directly attributable to the content of the myth, to its ensemble of interpretants, hence its purposes and its powers.

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