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ON THE QUESTION OF THE UKRAINIAN  
RECEPTION OF RUSSIAN FORMALISM:  
DMYTRO CHYZHEVSKY  
VERSUS BORIS EICHENBAUM

Dmytro Chyzhevsky,<sup>1</sup> an Ukrainian Slavic, literary and cultural historian, wrote article *About Gogol's "Overcoat"*,<sup>2</sup> which appeared in 1938 in the Russian immigrant journal *Современные записки*.<sup>3</sup> During his life, Chyzhevsky wrote three articles about Nikolai Gogol which were later combined into the paper *Gogol'-Studien*.<sup>4</sup> The earliest of the above mentioned articles was *About Gogol's "Overcoat"*.<sup>5</sup> According to the Ukrainian literary critic S. Matvienko, this study was written "at the time when

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<sup>1</sup> Dmytro Chyzhevsky (1894–1977) was born in the Russian Empire, in Alexandria, Kherson Oblast (now it is a part of Ukraine). During the civil war he supported the Mensheviks and in 1921 he emigrated. Following these events, his scientific career was connected with teaching at Universities of the Czechoslovak Republic, Germany, and the United States. His most famous works were in the fields of history of philosophy and literature: *Hegel in Russia*, *The History of Philosophy in the Ukraine*, *Philosophy of G. S. Skovoroda*, *The History of Ukrainian literature* and others.

<sup>2</sup> Чижевский, Д. О., «Шинели» Гоголя, *Современные записки*, 1938, т. 67, 172–195.

<sup>3</sup> *Современные записки* – a Russian literary immigrant journal which was published between 1920–1940 in Paris. The journal was created at the initiative of the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and with the participation of Alexander Kerensky. It was supported by the President of the Czechoslovak Republic T. G. Masaryk, who provided a "material assistance to the cause of Russian freedom and culture". (q. v. Вишняк, М., Воспоминания редактора, *Современные записки*, 1957, т. 7, 89–90.) The journal considered its main task the consolidation of creative forces of the Russian diaspora. It united almost all of the major writers of the first wave of Russian emigration. Among the regular contributors to the journal were N. Berdyaev, S. Bulgakov, N. Lossky, L. Shestov, L. Karsavin and others.

<sup>4</sup> Tschizewskij, D., *Gogol'-Studien*, in: *Zur russischen Literatur des 19. Jahrhunderts: Gogol' – Turgenew – Dostoevskij – Tolstoj*, München 1966, 57–125.

<sup>5</sup> First article was published in the German journal *Zeitschrift für Slavische Philologie* entitled *Zur Komposition von Gogol's „Mantel“* with a note that it is based on the report of 4th May 1936,

Chyzhevsky was under the influence of formalism”.<sup>6</sup> He was also influenced by theories of the *Prague Linguistic Circle*<sup>7</sup> in which he participated during 1926–1932.

This paper is dedicated to the comparative analysis of two studies: *About Gogol's "Overcoat"* by D. Chyzhevsky and *How Gogol's "Overcoat" Was Made*<sup>8</sup> by Boris Eichenbaum, who was a Russian literary critic and a prominent figure of OPOYAZ.<sup>9</sup> B. Eichenbaum's article was published in 1919. D. Chyzhevsky in his analysis of Gogol story proceeds from the theoretical aspects of Eichenbaum's study, which thus serves as a pretext for Chyzhevsky's article. On the one hand, Chyzhevsky's study is an interesting case of Ukrainian reception of Russian Formalism,<sup>10</sup> on the other hand, it represents an attempt to apply the structuralist approach to the analysis of the text. Besides, it is important to note that interpretation of the Gogol text

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which was made in Berlin. See: Tschizewskij, D., Zur Komposition von Gogol's „Mantel“, *Zeitschrift für Slavische Philologie*, 1937, bd. 14, 63–94.

<sup>6</sup> Матвієнко, С. Г., Дискурс формалізму: український контекст, in: *Соло триває... (Нові голоси): Лекції на пошану Соломії Павличко*, сост. С. Г. Матвієнко, Львів 2004, 32.

<sup>7</sup> The *Prague Linguistic Circle* or the *Prague School* was one of the leading centres of linguistic structuralism. It was founded in Prague in 1926 by the Czech linguist Vilém Mathesius. The Circle united linguists who studied the problems of general linguistics. Czechoslovak philologists participated in the work of the circle, such as B. Mathesius, B. Trnka, B. Havránek, J. Mukařovský, etc. Also Russian linguists N. Trubetskoj, R. Jakobson and Ukrainian philologist D. Chyzhevsky were part of the group.

<sup>8</sup> It was first published in the OPOYAZ collection «Поэтика». See: Эйхенбаум, Б., Как сделана «Шинель», in: *Поэтика. Сборник по теории поэтического языка*, Петроград 1919, 151–162.

<sup>9</sup> OPOYAZ (*Society for the Study of Poetic Language*) – Russian acronym created from *Общество по изучению поэтического языка*, which along with the *Moscow Linguistic Circle* was one of the precursor groups to Russian Formalism. The group was formed in St Petersburg, Russia, in 1916, by a group of students and professors working in literary and language studies. Its members included Victor Shklovsky, Boris Eichenbaum, Jurij Tynyanov and Roman Jakobson. At different times OPOYAZ included E. Polivanov, L. Jakubinsky, O. Brik, V. Vinogradov, V. Zhyrmunsky etc. The group was interested in uncovering the working mechanisms of literary technique, or more precisely identifying the specific quality of language use that separated the literary text from the non-literary text. Subsequently, the Formalist method had a great influence on the theory of Structuralism and the movement of the so-called New Criticism.

<sup>10</sup> Here and continuing in this article, Formalism refers to the theory of the Formalist method developed by OPOYAZ. At the heart of the Formalist method lies the idea of the immanence of literature and, as a consequence, an appeal to study the internal laws of its development. Formalists believed the main problem of literary criticism is the specificity in the form of the work, and all the elements of which it is composed are constructive elements. Formalists saw that the main task of literary criticism is in the analysis of separate devices that form a basis of the construction of the art work. See: Дмитриев, А. – Левченко, Я., Наука как прием: еще раз о методологическом наследии русского формализма, *НЛО*, 2001, № 50, 12–38.

made by Chyzhevsky is based on the tradition of Russian religious philosophy from the beginning of the 20th century.

At first, let's start from a few concepts taken from Boris Eichenbaum's article which had become almost classic by that time. His study, together with *Морфология волшебной сказки* by philologist-folklorist Vladimir Propp<sup>11</sup> and the research into narrative speech made by the linguist Victor Vinogradov,<sup>12</sup> is at the roof of modern narrative theory.

Rejecting the idea that literary text is determined by social and psychological factors directly, Eichenbaum views works of art as something that is always "made" and "fashioned", therefore highlighting the importance of the author's artistic techniques in a composition. He notes that structure of a short story depends largely on the role which the *author's personal tone* plays in it. Thus, the researcher distinguishes an adventurous novella with a dominant plot from a novella with *skaz-stylisation* in which "the plot plays an external importance and therefore in itself is static".<sup>13</sup> According to the smart observation made by V. Vinogradov in his approval of the plotlessness of Gogol's short stories Eichenbaum follows the tradition coming from the philosopher Vasily Rozanov.<sup>14</sup> From his perspective *skaz* can be of two types: the "chant-like" (declamatory style), which creates an impression of "author's even-tempered speech"; and "reproduced" (or "dramatic"), as if "an actor was hiding behind it".<sup>15</sup> The latter has a tendency not just to narrate or just to

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<sup>11</sup> Пропп, В., *Морфология волшебной сказки*, Москва, 1928.

<sup>12</sup> Here it could be mentioned such V. Vinogradov's works as *Гоголь и натуральная школа* (1925), *Проблема сказа в стилистике* (1926), *Этюды о стиле Гоголя* (1926), *О художественной прозе* (1930) etc.

<sup>13</sup> Eichenbaum, B., How Gogol's "Overcoat" Was Made, in: *Gogol from the Twentieth Century: Eleven Essays*, ed. and transl. R. A. Maguire, Princeton 1974, 269.

<sup>14</sup> V. Rozanov was one of the first who noted that Gogol's characters seem to be "still": "There are absolutely no real people in this picture: they are tiny wax figures, but they are all grimacing so artfully that we could even suspect that they started to move." See: Розанов, В., *Пушкин и Гоголь*. [online: <[http://dugward.ru/library/gogol/rozanov\\_pushkin\\_i\\_gogol.html](http://dugward.ru/library/gogol/rozanov_pushkin_i_gogol.html)>, cit. 2016-02-27].

<sup>15</sup> Eichenbaum, B., How Gogol's "Overcoat" Was Made, in: *Gogol from the Twentieth Century: Eleven Essays*, ed. and transl. R. A. Maguire, Princeton 1974, 269. In close connection to the Eichenbaum's article is Jurij Туньянов's article *Гоголь и Достоевский*. By analyzing the work of Gogol, Туньянов focuses on the *mask*-device, which is the basic technique of portraying people. The difference between *masks*, in his opinion, corresponds to the difference of styles, which is the high (tragic) and the low (comic). Thus, the researcher points out that there are two ways of portraying people in Gogol's works, which "go back to different linguistic elements: the high style is attributed to the Slavonic church whereas the simple style is to the dialectical one". See: Туньянов, Ю. Н., *Гоголь и Достоевский. К теории пародии*, Петроград 1921.

tell the story, but also “to reproduce words with an emphasis on mimetic and articulated sounds”.<sup>16</sup> Taking into account the fact that Gogol loved to read aloud and perform his stories Eichenbaum indicates the basis for the Gogolian text as *skaz*, “that is made up of the actual elements of speech and verbalized emotions”: “The real dynamic force and therefore the structure of Gogol’s work depends on the way the *skaz* is constructed, on the play of language. His characters are only petrified poses. They are dominated by the mirthful and ever-playful spirit of the artist himself.”<sup>17</sup>

The next part of his article focuses on the analysis of the separate phonetic *skaz*-devices and the system by which they are linked. Thus, Eichenbaum highlights the “etymological kinds of puns”, the forms of “common speech”, “epic *skaz*” and the “sentimental and melodramatic declamation” in the overall style of the text. The last one is used by way of contrasting the purely anecdotal style of *The Overcoat*. According to Eichenbaum, it explains the emergence of the so-called “humane place” in the novella: “Leave me alone! Why do you offend me?”<sup>18</sup> The criticism headed by the democratic revolutionary Alexander Belinsky saw in these words the central idea of the story: ideological pathos of the problem faced by a “little man” or “poor clerk”.<sup>19</sup> Eichenbaum’s attention to the phonetic dominant of *skaz*, and his disregard to its structure and semantics were subsequently criticized by V. Vinogradov.<sup>20</sup> Opinion of the literary historian Aage A. Hansen-Lowe was that the general orientation of the Formalists on the analysis of the phonetic and gesture articulation

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<sup>16</sup> Eichenbaum, B., How Gogol’s “Overcoat” Was Made, in: *Gogol from the Twentieth Century: Eleven Essays*, ed. and transl. Robert A. Maguire, Princeton 1974, 269.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibidem*, 270.

<sup>18</sup> The whole passage is: “And there was something strange in these words and the tone of voice in which they were uttered. Something that aroused compassion could be heard in them, do that one young man, who had been recently appointed and who, following the example of others, had allowed himself to tease him, suddenly stopped as if cut to the heart, and from that moment on everything seemed to change and present itself to him in a different light. Some unseen force turned him away from his colleagues, with whom he had become acquainted because he had taken them for decent and well-bred people. And for a long time thereafter the humble little clerk with the bald patch atop his head would appear before him in his happiest moment, speaking the heart-rending words: ‘Leave me alone. Why do you offend me!’ In these heart-rending words, others could be heard: ‘I’m your brother!’ And a poor young man would bury his face in his hands, and many times in his life thereafter he would shudder on seeing how much inhumanity there is in man...” See: Chizhevsky, D., About Gogol’s “Overcoat”, in: *Gogol from the Twentieth Century: Eleven Essays*, ed. and transl. R. A. Maguire, Princeton 1974, 318.

<sup>19</sup> *Гоголь в русской критике*, сост. С. Б. Бочаров, Москва 2008.

<sup>20</sup> Виноградов, В., *Гоголь и натуральная школа*, Ленинград 1925, 10.

of *skaz* (in the early stages of the theory of Formalism)<sup>21</sup> is comparable to the theory of *zaum*<sup>22</sup> and its “constructive realization in the plot”<sup>23</sup>

In certain sense, D. Chyzhevsky tries to overcome Eichenbaum’s “one-way” understanding of artistic construction of *The Overcoat*, as Vinogradov emphasized.<sup>24</sup> Chyzhevsky refers to the analysis of the function of details in the story. Within such an approach, the methodological connection with the theoretical views of the *Prague School* could be noticed. One of its significant achievements was an idea of studying language elements in a system which made it possible to consider the text as organically whole: “The relationship between actualized and non-actualized components of the poetic text form a structure that is dynamic in its nature. It is also united as an artistic fact, because each of its elements obtains their meaning only in their relationship to the whole.”<sup>25</sup> Scientists of the *Prague School* were one of the first who started to consider the text as a whole structure, and thus defining the area of competence in poetics and linguistics. According to Roman Jakobson, poetics as a field of science dealing with the study of speech patterns can be defined as part of linguistics. The new element in his proposal was idea of studying the poetic function “in its connection to other language functions”<sup>26</sup>

<sup>21</sup> I speak here about ОРОУАЗ works from the second half of the 1910s to the early 1920s.

<sup>22</sup> *Zaum*’ (also «заумный язык», “trans-sense language”) was the most radical expression of the new concept of poetry proclaimed by the Russian futurists in their manifestoes. It had to be treated and perceived as the “word as such”, a phonetic entity possessing its own ontology. *Zaum*’, therefore, is an experimental language which consists of neologism rich in sound, but devoid of any conventional meaning. The theorists of *zaum*’ were Aleksei Kruchenykh and Velimir Khlebnikov. See more: *Handbook of Russian Literature*, ed. V. Terras, Yale 1990, 530.

<sup>23</sup> According to the Austrian literary historian A. Hansen-Lowe, “Vinogradov’s merit lies in the fact that he was the first to have made an attempt to create a theory of *skaz* and narration from the point of ‘linguistic stylistics’, a theory striving for a unified functional examination of stylistic perspective and compositional factors.” See: Ханзен-Леве, О., *Русский формализм: Методологическая реконструкция развития на основе принципа остранения*, Москва 2001, 282.

<sup>24</sup> V. Vinogradov: “However, it should be noted that the concept of the ‘Overcoat’, as a grotesque ‘game’ of language, is revealed purely intuitively by Eichenbaum through the ‘critical instinct’ and the general premise of a futuristic aesthetic, outside the historical tradition of ‘bureaucratic’ stories of that time. Therefore, that way of understanding of the artistic construction of the ‘Overcoat’ proposed by him is one-sided and distorted.” See: Виноградов, В., *Гоголь и натуральная школа*, Ленинград 1925, 25.

<sup>25</sup> Мукаревский, Я., *Литературный язык и поэтический язык*, in: *Пражский лингвистический кружок*, сост. Н. А. Кондрашова, Москва 1967, 413.

<sup>26</sup> Якобсон, Р., *Лингвистика и поэтика*, in: *Структурализм «за» и «против»*, Москва 1975, 193–230.

Chyzhevsky takes these concepts into account but also considers Eichenbaum's thesis that *trivial details* (such as stylistic convergence or the play of language) play a special role in the structure of composition. *The Overcoat* draws attention to the word *even* (rus. «даже»), which is found in the story 73 times. The following thought sequence appeals to the quazi-formalist thesis which states that "colloquial speech or *skaz*, as the modern literary historians say, is characterized by the repetition of the same word."<sup>27</sup> It is important to note two points: first of all, the presence or absence of repeated words is not main characteristic of *skaz* as author's narrative form; and secondly, it is necessary to draw attention to Chyzhevsky's terminology. Although using the concepts of the *Formalist School*, the author avoids any references to it, even stating: "as the modern literary historians say."<sup>28</sup> An interesting fact could be mentioned here: the first edition of the article was published in the German journal *Zeitschrift für Slavische Philologie*<sup>29</sup> and its content was almost identical to the Russian text published a year later in *Современные записки*. The only exception can be found in the first paragraph. The German article from 1937 begins with the following statement: "B. Eichenbaum dedicated a special study to Gogol's 'Overcoat'. He emphasized that there are, as elsewhere in Gogol's stories, 'small details' that play an important role, but he did not pay attention to all of the lexical details."<sup>30</sup> In the next edition we read: "We have all been familiar with this story since our schooldays; and if, in later life, we happen to read books and articles on Gogol, they would have told us the same old things, regardless of whether they have been the product of a 'social approach', or the work of the Formalists: that *The Overcoat* represents one stage in Gogol's development in the direction of realism."<sup>31</sup> Firstly, the Formalists do not solve the problem of Gogol's realism. Secondly, it is obvious that such a difference between the two editions is not accidental. And we can assume it could be connected with the ideological position of *Современные записки*, which influenced

<sup>27</sup> Chizhevsky, D., About Gogol's "Overcoat", in: *Gogol from the Twentieth Century: Eleven Essays*, ed. and transl. R. A. Maguire, Princeton 1974, 295.

<sup>28</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>29</sup> Tschizewskij, D., Zur Komposition von Gogol's „Mantel“, *Zeitschrift für Slavische Philologie*, 1937, bd. 14, 63–94.

<sup>30</sup> An original version: „B. Eichenbaum hat der Komposition des ‚Mantel‘ eine besondere Studie gewindet. Obwohl er darin richtig hervorhebt, das hier – wie auch sonst bei Gogol – die ‚Kleinigkeiten‘ eine grosse Rolle spielen, ist seiner Aufmerksamkeit doch eine wesentliche lexikalische Kleinigkeit entgangen.“ See: Tschizewskij, D., Gogol'-Studien, in: *Zur russischen Literatur des 19. Jahrhunderts: Gogol' – Turgenew – Dostoevskij – Tolstoj*, München 1966, 99.

<sup>31</sup> Chizhevsky, D., About Gogol's "Overcoat", in: *Gogol from the Twentieth Century: Eleven Essays*, ed. and transl. R. A. Maguire, Princeton 1974, 295.

the rejection of the entire revolutionary ideal. Since the *Formalist School* is, in some sense, a phenomenon of revolutionary Russia all the references to it were unwanted.

By following Eichenbaum's logic, Chyzhevsky brings the function of *even* into relationship with the *comic effects* of the story: "The repetition of *even* in, 'The Overcoat' is not only used for *skaz* stylisation. It is concerned with the features of Gogol's humour."<sup>32</sup> At the same time it is important to note: unlike Eichenbaum, Chyzhevsky is not interested in the study of functions of separate *skaz*-devices in the whole composition of the story. He just notes that "the narrator is tongue-tied" and mentions the forms of "senseless speech", but does not go further to explain it. Thus, it seems that the "methodological net" of Eichenbaum's article was appropriated by him as a "readymade" thing. Chyzhevsky placed this net on the structure of Gogol's novella trying to prove that the word *even* actually has a special semantic and stylistic function. Chyzhevsky paraphrases Eichenbaum's thesis to state that *comic effects* are achieved by the "manner of narration" built on the "change of intensified intonation that forms periods"<sup>33</sup> and notes: "The comic side of Gogol's story is a kind of game of contrasts – meaningful and senseless – antitheses, a game in which they interchange with each other."<sup>34</sup> Further he writes: "The use of *even* is a part of this game; *even* emphasizes intensification, raises, marks intensive notes – and if there is no rise [...] we are disappointed, bewildered but Gogol has achieved a comic effect!"<sup>35</sup> This stylistic mismatch, according to Eichenbaum, is used by Gogol as a grotesque device, in which "the mimicry of laughter alternates with the mimicry of sorrow – both creating the impression of being a performance with a pre-established order of gestures and registers".<sup>36</sup> Thus, it becomes obvious that Gogol chose the anecdote as a fantastically small world "within whose narrow confines the artist has liberty to exaggerate details and violate the normal proportions of the world".<sup>37</sup> Eichenbaum notes that Akaky Akakievich's inner world is not insignificant, but is fantastically limited, "very insular", so "according to the laws of this world, a new overcoat proves to be a grand event".<sup>38</sup> If we continued to follow Eichenbaum's thesis, we would presume that *even* emphasizes what is unusual for this world. That is why Akaky Akakievich begins "even laughing", he is "even inattentive in his work", he "even notices a pretty lady" etc. However, Chyzhevsky paradoxically comes

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<sup>32</sup> Ibidem, 302.

<sup>33</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>34</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>35</sup> Ibidem, 302–303.

<sup>36</sup> Ibidem, 286.

<sup>37</sup> Ibidem, 288.

<sup>38</sup> Ibidem.

to the opposite conclusion. He also notes that Akaky Akakievich's small world is a big one for himself, because "it is full of objects that the poor clerk is looking down at".<sup>39</sup> The researcher concludes that *even* helps to reveal the matter of this world, which is "insignificant": "What comes after *even* proves to be nonentity, a trifle. This means that in this particular realm of living insignificance, 'nothingless' is represented as being significant and essential. So the matter and purpose of life prove to be insignificant, empty, and absurd."<sup>40</sup> Next Chyzhevsky proceeds directly to the interpretation of the text.

The last half of the article represents the inverse methodological intention. Eichenbaum proceeds from the position that "in a work of art not a single sentence can, in and of itself, be a mere 'reflection' of the author's personal feelings". Chyzhevsky treats text as a product of the author's will, thus trying to figure out "what the author wanted to say". He notes that the central idea of the story lies in Akaky Akakievich's words – "Leave me alone! Why do you offend me?" He states that "there is no doubt that this passage contains ideas which are fundamental to Gogol".<sup>41</sup> Based on the fact that "Gogol solves difficult psychological issues in his literary works",<sup>42</sup> Chyzhevsky sees in the figure of Bashmachkin not just a "poor clerk" but a man who sets out on the road of "accumulation" or "acquisition" which indicates his spiritual downfall. Thus, according to the researcher, Gogol depicts not just the overcoat but a fervour of the overcoat that has captured the soul of Akaky Akakievich and because of it he dies: "One can meet a tragic end not only from great passions that are directed at something grand, exalted, important, but also from passions that are directed at something trivial."<sup>43</sup> In his interpretation of the idea of the story Chyzhevsky refers to Gogol's correspondence in 1840–1842. In particular, the researcher notes that during this period one of the most important questions for him was whether a person could attach his life to things of the external world. In his letter dated 20th June 1843, to his close friend A. Danilevsky, Gogol wrote: "External life is outside God, internal life is in God."<sup>44</sup> In these words Chyzhevsky finds the confirmation of "insignificance" of the depicted world and concludes that Akaky Akakievich had lost his "inner Centre" (in other words, God) because he "went mad due to a useless object" of the external world: "The world and The Devil ensnare man not only

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<sup>39</sup> Ibidem, 310.

<sup>40</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>41</sup> Ibidem, 296.

<sup>42</sup> Ibidem, 315.

<sup>43</sup> Ibidem, 319.

<sup>44</sup> Ibidem, 317.

with things that are grand, but also with the trivial.”<sup>45</sup> Chyzhevsky interprets the phantasmagorical end of the story from the perspective of Christian dualism: if there is no God in a human soul, then the soul is in the power of the devil. According to Chyzhevsky, Akaky Akakievich appears like a ghost because he did not find “peace beyond the grave, his soul is still attached to its trivial love”.<sup>46</sup> Chyzhevsky concludes that the devil is the main hero of all Gogol’s stories. In *The Overcoat* the devil is depicted through the figure of the tailor Petrovich, who gave Akaky Akakievich the idea of a new overcoat. In conclusion, Chyzhevsky writes: “Gogol’s story of a ‘poor clerk’ is not ridiculous, but frightening.”<sup>47</sup>

In his designation of Gogol as “an artist of evil” who exposes the “godless, miserable world”, Chyzhevsky finds himself in the context of interpreting Gogol as a mystic, which was a characteristic trait of Russian religious philosophy of the early 20th century. In particular, we are interested in the views of Vasily Rozanov and Nikolai Berdyaev on Gogol’s works. It is known that V. Rozanov “fought” with Gogol throughout his life as a writer: “Through my entire literary career I am fighting with Gogol, and my soul has not been suffering for anyone as much as for him. No literature has a writer like Gogol. He is frightening. And over this ‘Fear’ I have been thinking and pondering for 24 years.”<sup>48</sup> During different periods, his attitude to Gogol changed<sup>49</sup> from complete rejection and blaming him for “manslaughter”<sup>50</sup> to acceptance and proclamation of Gogol as a prophet.<sup>51</sup> Of particular importance in the evaluation of Gogol was the October Revolution, which, according to the philosopher, “justified” him: “The Revolution showed us the soul of the ‘plain people’ of Russia; uncle Mityaya and uncle Minyaya, and then Petrushku smelling

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<sup>45</sup> Ibidem, 320.

<sup>46</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>47</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>48</sup> Розанов, В., *Мимолетное. Собрание сочинений*, ред. А. Н. Николокина, Москва 1994, 466.

<sup>49</sup> This question has been considered by the literary critic A. Golubkova in her article: Голубкова, А. ... Вот почему я отрицаю Гоголя, *Октябрь*, 2006, № 6. [online: <<http://magazines.russ.ru/october/2006/6/go7.html>>, cit. 2016-02-27].

<sup>50</sup> Rozanov makes a remark about Gogol’s novel *Dead Souls*: “But we know that in the first volume he fulfilled only half of his task; it could be clear that it is no longer a narrowing, but the crippling of the human against what he really is, which we find here.” See: Розанов, В., *Как произошел тип Акакия Акакиевича*. [online: <[http://dugward.ru/library/rozanov/rozanov\\_kak\\_proizochel\\_tip\\_akakiya.html](http://dugward.ru/library/rozanov/rozanov_kak_proizochel_tip_akakiya.html)>, cit. 2016-02-27].

<sup>51</sup> Anna Golubkova notes that in the second half of the 1890s Rozanov had changed his attitude to Gogol, which was a result of his friendship with A. Merezhkovsky. See: Голубкова, А., ... Вот почему я отрицаю Гоголя, *Октябрь*, 2006, № 6. [online: <<http://magazines.russ.ru/october/2006/6/go7.html>>, cit. 2016-02-27].

of sweat and the ingenious Selifan. In general, only the Revolution justified Gogol.”<sup>52</sup> Rozanov marks that it was the Revolution which was the power that made people unveil their true nature, so he writes bitterly: “Rus<sup>53</sup> faded in two days. At most – three. Even ‘Novoje vremja’ could not be closed as soon as Russia was closed. Amazingly, it all fell apart at once, down to the details, down to the particulars.”<sup>54</sup> As Rozanov, Berdyaev sees a great artist in Gogol who “was given to opening the negative aspects of the Russians, their dark spirits, all that was inhuman, distorting the image and likeness of God”.<sup>55</sup> And further he notes: “The Revolution revealed the same old, ever-Gogol Russia – the inhuman, animal-like Russia of mugs and muzzles.”<sup>56</sup> According to the philosopher Alexander Pyatigorsky, Berdyaev’s interpretation connects with his understanding of the content of the revolution: for Berdyaev, its fear was not in “what was felled and destroyed, but in what was found out”.<sup>57</sup> The Russian Revolution revealed only the “insignificant”, according to Chyzhevsky, world of Akaky Akakievich.

Thus, the second part of Chyzhevsky’s article is in some contrast to the first. The primary part shows his findings in the intellectual fields of “formalism” and “structuralism”; then he begins a reverse approach to the analysis of the text which raises the question of the author’s methodological intention. S. Matvienko, in her analysis of Chyzhevsky article, says that he, unlike Eichenbaum, is overcoming the boundaries of the work in and of itself, thus “raising the content of the story to ontological problems”.<sup>58</sup> This opinion rises some doubts. The example of Chyzhevsky’s article actually indicates a very interesting case in the reception of the Formalist method. On the one hand, we could mark his application and even his appropriation of terminological apparatus, and, moreover, his attempt to “fit into the way of formalist thinking”<sup>59</sup> and adopt individual ideas. On the other hand, a detailed analysis of

<sup>52</sup> Розанов, В., *Гоголь и Петрарка*. [online: <[http://dugward.ru/library/rozanov/rozanov\\_gogol\\_i\\_petrarka.html/](http://dugward.ru/library/rozanov/rozanov_gogol_i_petrarka.html/)>, cit. 2016-02-27].

<sup>53</sup> “Rus” – here the Russian Empire.

<sup>54</sup> Розанов, В., *Апокалипсис наших дней*. Мимолетное. Собрание сочинений, ред. А. Н. Николюкина, Москва 1994, 470.

<sup>55</sup> Бердяев, Н., *Гоголь и революция: в 2 томах.*, in: *Духи русской революции*, т. II, Москва 1990, 124.

<sup>56</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>57</sup> Пятигорский, А., *Свободный философ Пятигорский: в 2 томах*, ред. А. Марков, т. II, Санкт-Петербург 2015, 49.

<sup>58</sup> Матвієнко, С. Г., *Дискурс формалізму: український контекст*, in: *Соло триває... (Нові голоси): Лекції на пошану Соломії Павличко*, сост. С. Г. Матвієнко, Львів 2004, 32.

<sup>59</sup> Грабович, Г., *Апорія українського формалізму*, in: *Соло триває... (Нові голоси): Лекції на пошану Соломії Павличко*, сост. С. Г. Матвієнко, Львів 2004, 90.

the article does not simply refer to the “methodological eclecticism”,<sup>60</sup> but to the pseudo-formalist (and pseudo-structuralist) approach to the analysis of the text. It is also obvious that the “inadequate” methods used reveal themselves in the “diffusion” of diverse methodological approaches resulting in the feeling of “confusion” in the recipient. In other words, it is not clear what “position” the researcher argues for. One would assume that Chyzhevsky speaks from a position of Russian religious philosophy, and at the same time tries to secure the assistance of the Formalist method.

## ABSTRACT

### **On the Question of the Ukrainian Reception of Russian Formalism: Dmytro Chyzhevsky versus Boris Eichenbaum**

*Galina Babak*

The study is devoted to the comparative analysis of the two articles, which are based on the using of Formal method. That are Boris Eichenbaum’s article *How Gogol’s “Overcoat” Was Made* (1918) and Dmytro Chyzhevsky’s article *About Gogol’s “Overcoat”* (1938). As D. Chyzhevsky took part in the work of *Prague Linguistic Circle* he was influenced by its ideas. His article shows an interesting attempt of application of the formalists approach to the analysis of the literary work. The study also rises the question of the theoretical views of D. Chyzhevsky in its connection to the ideas of Russian Formalist School.

**Key words:** Formalism, Ukrainian Formalism, Structuralism, Prague Linguistic Circle, D. Chyzhevsky

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<sup>60</sup> S. Matvienko marks such features that characterise the scientific approach of Chyzhevsky: “... the ease of transition during the analysis from the philological to the philosophical problematic and from the cultural to social issues in his work, and moreover, we can say that in general Chyzhevsky’s methodological eclecticism is not accidental.” See: Матвієнко, С. Г., Дискурс формалізму: український контекст, in: *Соло триває... (Нові голоси): Лекції на пошану Соломії Павличко*, сост. С. Г. Матвієнко, Львів 2004, 32.