

The Religious Conflict between Gogol and Belinsky

Franklin A. WALKER, Ph.D.
Loyola University, Chicago

“When, under the cover of religion and the defense of the knout, falsehood and immorality is being propagated as truth and virtue, it is impossible to be silent.”¹ Vissarion Belinsky’s flaming letter to Nikolay Gogol marked a dramatic moment in modern Russian intellectual history. Russia’s foremost critic denounced in the most bitter terms the religious views of Russia’s greatest literary genius, and in so doing penned the manifesto for that country’s revolutionary atheism. Nothing Belinsky ever wrote contributed so much to his fame, nothing came so much from his passionate heart, yet it was a document from a dying man to a dying friend, whose contribution to society none had more clearly recognized.

Belinsky’s attack was against Gogol’s 1847 book, *Selected Passages From Correspondence With Friends*, in which Gogol expressed his love for his countrymen by giving them religious advice. In his artistic works he had sought to edify indirectly, now he attempted open preaching² of the truths of Christianity in which he had always believed and which occupied an increasingly important place in his thoughts as death drew near. Belinsky also had undergone an evolution – from romantic idealism to socialist atheism – and was only repulsed by religious attitudes he had long since abandoned and which he associated with everything hateful to reason and harmful to society. Educated youth admired these two writers above all others.³ Hitherto both had been regarded as heroes in the “progressive”

¹ Belinsky to Gogol, 3 July, 1847, E. A. Lyatsky (ed.), *Belinsky Pis'ma*, 3 vols., S: Peterburg, 1914, III, 230. The letter was circulated widely in Russia in handwritten copies, but was first printed outside of Russia in Alexander Herzen’s *Polyarnaya Zvezda*, 1855. Its first printing in Russia was in the journal *Vestnik Yvropa*, 1872. *Ibid.*, editor’s note, 377. The books used for this paper are from the Newberry Library, Chicago, the Harper Library, University of Chicago, and from the Library of Congress.

² V. I. Shenrok, *Materialy dlya Biografii Gogolya*, 4 vols., Moscow, 1892-1897, IV, 633.

³ V. V. Stasov, “Gogol' v vospriyatii russkoy molodezhi 30-40'kh gg.” (1881), in S. Mashinsky (ed.), *Gogol' v Vospominaniyakh Sovremennikov*, Moscow, 1952, 396-401. A. I. Gerston, *Byloye i Dumy* (1855), in F. M. Golovchenko (ed.), *Belinsky v Vospominaniyakh Sovremennikov*, Moscow, 1948, 112.

camp;⁴ their split represented a personal conflict⁵ and a national religious crisis.⁶

The moral influence on their contemporaries of the two men was enormous. This was exercised in their conversation, in their letters and above all in their writings.⁷ The number of studies of these two writers in the tsarist and the Soviet periods testifies to their place in Russian history.⁸ Both were pleasant companions, occupying a leading place in the

⁴ A. N. Pypin, *Kharakteristiki Literaturnykh Mneniy of dvadstatykh do pyatidesyatikh godov*, Sanktpeterburg, 1873, 344-345.

⁵ N. Stepanov, "Belinsky i Gogol'," in N. L. Brodsky (ed.), *Belinsky Istorik i Teoretik Literaturnykh Sbornik Statey*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1949, 272: "The relationship of Belinsky and Gogol represents one of the most significant and at the same time one of the most dramatic moments in the lives and works of both writers."

⁶ That great artist, profound religious and social thinker, the novelist Leo Tolstoy at the end of his life found the Belinsky-Gogol confrontation so interesting he considered an article on the subject. S. Breytburga, "L. N. Tolstoy o Pis'me Belinskogo k Gogolu," *Literaturnoye Nasledstvo*, LVII, 278.

⁷ On the moral influence of Belinsky: I. I. Panayev, *Literaturnyye Vospominaniya, Ivanov-Razumnik* (ed.), Leningrad, 1928, 481. A. Y. Panayev, *Vospominaniya*, K. Chukovsky (ed.), Moscow, 1956, 97. Apollon Aleksandrovich Grigor'yev, *Materialy dlya Biografii*, V. Knyazhin (ed.), Petrograd, 1917, 69. K. D. Kavelin, "Vospominaniya o V. G. Belinskom" (written 1874, published 1899), in *Belinsky v Vospominaniyakh Sovremennikov*, *op. cit.*, 85 and 88. Nekrasov poem (1855), "V. G. Belinsky," in N. A. Nekrasov, *Polnoye Sobraniye Sochineniy i Pisem*, 12 vols., Moscow, 1948-1953, I, 142, and Nekrasov poem "Medvezh'i Okhota," cited on frontespiece of *Belinsky v Vospominaniyakh Sovremennikov*, *op. cit.*, 6. On the moral influence of Gogol: D. Obolensky, "O Pervom Izdanii Posmertnykh Sochineniya Gogolya. Vospominaniya Kn. D. Obolenskago," *Russkaya Starina* (1873), VIII, 941-942, n. 2 and 953. V. I. Shenrok, "Druz'ya Nikolaya Vasil'yevicha Gogolya," *Russkaya Starina*, LXIII (1889), 163-164. A. I. Gertsen, "Otryvki iz dnevnika," 11 June and 25 June, 1842, in A. K. Kotov and M. Y. Polyakov (eds.), *N. V. Gogol' v Russkoy Kritike*, Moscow, 1953, 323. N. G. Chernyshevsky, "Dnevnik," 2 August, 1848, 4 August, 1848 and 23 September, 1848, N. G. Chernyshevsky, *Polnoye Sobraniye Sochineniy*, I, Moscow, 1939, 66, 68-70 and 127. G. O. Berliner, "Chernyshevsky i Gogol'," in V. V. Gippius (ed.), *N. V. Gogol' Materialy i Issledovaniya*, 2 vols., Moscow-Leningrad, 1936, II, 525-526. M. V. Nechkina, "Gogol' i Lenina," *ibid.*, II, 534-535. Nestor Kotlyaryevsky, *Nikolay Vasil'yevich Gogol'*, Petrograd, 1915, 390-391. N. L. Stepenov, *N. V. Gogol' Tvorcheskiy Put'*, Moscow, 1957, 501-502. M. B. Khrapchenko, *Tvorchestvo Gogolya*, Moscow, 1956, 537.

⁸ There is a bibliography of Belinsky studies in *Literaturnoye Nasledstvo*, LVII, 411-534. The classical study of the period is Chernyshevsky's "Ocherki Gogolevskago Perioda Russkoy Literatury" (*Sovremennik*, 1855-1856), in N. G. Chernyshevsky, *Polnoye Sobraniye Sochinenii N. G. Chernyshevskago*, 10 vols., S: Peterburg, 1906, II, 1-276. The standard biography of Belinsky is A. N. Pypin, *Belinsky yego Zhizn' i Perepiska*, S: Peterburg, 1876. Soviet studies include P. I. Lebedev-Polyansky, *V. G. Belinsky Literaturno-Kriticheskaya Deyatel'nost'*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1945, and V. S. Nechayeva, *V. G. Belinsky Ucheniye v Universitete i Roboti v "Teleskope" i "Molve," 1829-1836*, Akademii Nauk SSSR,

intellectual circles of Moscow and St. Petersburg. Contemporaries noted an awkward shyness about both of them, a reserve which Belinsky cast off when in his most loved occupation—ideological quarreling—or when listening to someone expound new ideas,⁹ and which Gogol overcame while reading his artistic works, in conversation, or when engaging in prankish mimicry.¹⁰ While not the closest of friends, they knew the same people,

1954. There is a good narrative account of Belinsky for school children in M. Y. Polyakov, *Vissarion Grigor'yevich Belinsky*, Moscow, 1960. A series of articles on Belinsky's position is in *Literaturnoye Nasledstvo*, LV, 3-284. For the intellectual activity of the 1830's and 1840's: S. A. Vengerov, *Epokha Belinskago*, S: Peterburg, 1905. A comparison of Belinsky and Gogol from the Soviet viewpoint, where Belinsky's letter to Gogol is seen as "a document of the progress of Russian revolutionary democracy" is S. I. Mashinsky, *N. V. Gogol' i V. G. Belinsky*, Moscow, 1952, 27. A brief English study of Belinsky is Herbert E Bowman, *Vissarion Belinsky*, Cambridge, Mass., 1954. All histories of nineteenth century Russian literature treat extensively of the two men, for example D. N. Ovsyaniko-Kulikovskiy (ed.), *Istoriya Russkoy Literatury XIX v.*, 5 vols., Moscow, 1908-1911, 11 (1910), Ivanov-Krazumni, *Istoriya Russkoy Obshchestvennoy Mysli*, 2 vols., S.-Peterburg, 1911, I, 172-243 and 279-323, and also the charming R. V. Pletnev, *Lektsii Po Istorii Russkoy Literatury 18 i 19 vekov*, Toronto, 1959. For bibliographies of Gogol material see Gippius (ed.), *N. V. Gogol' Materialy i Issledovaniya*, *op. cit.*, I, 381-464, and N. N. Kirikova and L. A. Rozina, "Proizvedeniya Gogolya, svyazannyye s Peterburgskim Universitetom," in M. P. Alekseyev (ed.), *Gogol' Stat'i i Materialy*, Leningrad, 1954, 389-391. A full study of Gogol's creative period and his significance is Kotlyarevsky, *Nikolay Vasil'yevich Gogol'*, *op. cit.*, while the originality of Gogol's art is attested in D. N. Ovsyaniko-Kulikovskiy, *Sobraniye Sochineniy, I, Gogol'*, St. Petersburg, 1909, 169. A short biography and an analysis of his works is contained in V. Yermilov, *N. V. Gogol*, Moscow, 1952. For a study of Gogol's period and his associates see M. Gus, *Gogol' i Nikolayevskaya Rossiya*, Moscow, 1957. A collection of Belinsky's criticisms of Gogol are in Kotov and Polyakov (eds.), *N. V. Gogol' v Russkoy Kritike*, *op. cit.*, 5-315. Works on Gogol in English include Janko Lavrin, *Nikolai Gogol*, London, 1951, and David Magarshack, *Gogol a Life*, London, undated.

⁹ I. A. Goncharov to K. D. Kavelin, 25 March, 1874, *Literaturnoye Nasledstvo*, LVI, 261. M. M. Popov letter (undated) printed in I. I. Lazhechnikov, "Zametki dlya Biografii Belinskago" (March, 1849) in *Belinsky v Vospominaniyakh Sovremennikov*, *op. cit.*, 19-20. I. S. Turgeniev, "Vospominaniya o Belinskom" (1864), *ibid.*, 349-350. I. A. Goncharov, "Zametki o Lichnosti Belinskago" (1874), *ibid.*, 378-382. I. I. Lazhechnikov, *ibid.*, 24. A. I. Gerston, *Byloye i Dumy* (1855), *ibid.*, 113.

¹⁰ V. A. Sologub "Iz Vospominanii V. A. Sologuba," *Russkiy Arkhiv*, III (1865), 741-743. M. N. Shchepkin in V. I. Veselovskiy, "Pervoye Znakomstvo Gogolya s Shchepkinyn," *Russkaya Starina*, V (1872), 282-283. N. V. Berg, "Vospominaniya o N. V. Gogolye," *Russkaya Starina*, V (1872), 118-128. S. T. Axsakov, *Istoriya Moyego Znakomstva s Gogolyem so vkhlyucheniyem vsey perepiski s 1832 po 1852 g.*, E. P. Naselenko i E. A. Smirnova (eds.), Moscow, 1960, 56-57. T. G. Pashchenko, "Cherty iz Zhizni Gogolya" (1880), in *Gogol' v Vospominaniyakh Sovremennikov*, *op. cit.*, 41. M. N. Longinov, "Vospominaniyakh o Gogolye" (1854),

sometimes dined together and occasionally corresponded.¹¹ If Belinsky began the predominant and still-surviving tone of “realism” in literary criticism,¹² he was nevertheless influenced in his understanding of realism by the artistic realism in Gogol’s stories and plays.¹³ They fought a common battle for new aesthetic standards, and whatever debt the critic owed the artist was paid one hundred fold in the critic’s ardent acclaim of Gogol’s genius.¹⁴

Although Belinsky’s thought changed from advocacy of German idealism and the acceptance of religion to one of French socialism and atheism, he was consistent in his emphasis on the importance of moral and intellectual improvement,¹⁵ in his awareness of his role as a propagator of truth,¹⁶ in a regard for philosophy as a life-and-death question which made him one-sided in whatever position he happened to hold at the moment,¹⁷ and also in his readiness to listen to arguments and to admit his mistakes.¹⁸ To any kind of religiosity,

Ibid., 72-73. A. P. Tolchenov, “Gogol’ v Odesse 1850-1851 g.,” *ibid.*, 418-419.

¹¹ I. I. Panayev to K. S. Aksakov, 8 December, 1839, *Literaturnoye Nasledstvo*, LVI, 135. Shenrok, *Materialy dlya Biografii Gogolya*, *op. cit.*, IV, 45-50.

¹² Chernyshevsky, “Ocherki Gogolyevskogo Perioda Russkoy Literatury,” *Polnoye Sobraniye Sochineniy*, *op. cit.*, II, 276. B. I. Bursov, “Teoriya realizma v estetika Belinskago,” in N. I. Mordovchenko (ed.), *Belinsky Stat’i i Materialy*, Leningrad, 1949, 87. A. Lavretsky, *V. G. Belinsky 1811-1848*, Moscow, 1948, 148.

¹³ N. Mordovchenko, *Belinsky Russkaya Literatura yego Vremeni*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1950, 75 and 180. N. Stepanov, “Belinsky i Gogol’,” Brodsky (ed.), *Belinsky*, *op. cit.*, 272-322.

¹⁴ P. V. Annenkov, *Literaturnyya Vospominaniya*, St. Petersburg, 1909, 203. Panayev, *Literaturnyye Vospominaniya*, *op. cit.*, 230-231. S. Mashinski, *Gogol’ i Revolyutsionnyye Demokraty*, Moscow, 1953, 7-8, 95 and 180. N. I. Mordovchenko, “Belinsky v bor’be za Gogolya v 40-e gody,” Mordovchenko (ed.), *Belinsky Stat’i i Materialy*, *op. cit.*, 89-125.

¹⁵ His student article “Rassuzhdeniye” (1829) is on this subject. V. G. Belinski, *Polnoye Sobraniye Sochinenii*, 12 vols., Moscow, 1953-1956, I, 15-16. After reading Zhukovsky he wrote friends that the purpose of reading books was to educate the heart and to enlighten and raise the soul. Belinsky to A. P. and E. P. Ivanov, 20 December, 1829, *Belinsky Pis’ma*, *op. cit.*, I, 7. Belinsky’s letters, since they were free from the censor, provide the best source for his thought. Many letters to Belinsky are contained in N. L. Brodsky (ed.), *V. G. Belinsky i yego Korrespondenty*, Moscow, 1948, 34-291, and in “Perepiska Belinskago s Rodnymi,” *Literaturnoye Nasledstvo*, LXVII, 27-240.

¹⁶ T. N. Granovsky to N. V. Stankevich (undated but in the 1820’s), *T. N. Granovsky i yego Perepiska*, 2 vols., Moscow, 1897, II, 365. Belinsky to his parents, 17 February, 1831, *Belinsky Pis’ma*, *op. cit.*, I, 30.

¹⁷ N. M. Satin to Belinsky, 7 November, 1837, *Belinsky i yego Korrespondenty*, *op. cit.*, 265, and same to same, 27 December, 1837, *ibid.*, 267-270. A. I. Gertsen, “0 Razvitiy Revolyutsionnykh Idey v Rossii” (1851), in *Belinsky v Vospominaniyakh Sovremennikov*, *op. cit.*, 103. V. A. Panayev, “Vospominaniy” (1893), in *Belinsky v Vospominaniyakh Sovremennikov*, *ibid.*, 119.

¹⁸ N. N. Tyutchev, “Moye Znakomstvo s V. G. Belinskum” (1874), *ibid.*, 335. I. S. Turgeniev, “Vstrecha moya s Belinskam” (1860) (pis’ma k N. A. Osnovskomu), *ibid.*, 342.

he was always foreign. Stop advising me to visit churches, Belinsky had told his mother when in 1830 he began his student's life at the University of Moscow. Making pilgrimages to churches, he thought, did nothing for one's moral life and was only boring. It was more important to visit the theater.¹⁹ "Religion is not in fasting and in prayers," he wrote his mother in 1833, "it is in the soul, in the heart, in the activities of a man."²⁰ In his first major article, *Literary Dreamings*, published in 1834, he asserted that the Russian mind was foreign to "mysticism" and to "mystery."²¹

While he questioned the validity of religious externals, he yet maintained that sense of total dedication which is the mark of a religious man. He was bold enough as a university student to write and to read before his comrades a play which assailed the existing slavery of serfdom; for this he was expelled.²² He did not leave the university, however, without having absorbed from the lectures of N. I. Nadezhdin, through self-study and the acquaintance among the students of some of the most remarkable minds Russia ever produced, an interest in philosophy and in social and historical questions, which provided the groundwork for his career as the mentor of Russian youth in the more popular of the learned journals.²³

Philosophy was Belinsky's religion in the 1830's, for through philosophy, he said, a man approached God, who was the source of that love which binds us to our friends, to our fatherland and to humanity. God was a living spirit, breathing through the universe as the eternal idea, the appreciation of which should oblige us to neglect our selfish interests in the service of others.²⁴ As love and truth, God was not separate from the world, but rather was in the world, was everywhere. One should look for God not in temples, but in the hearts of men, in art, in knowledge.²⁵ German idealism had given an entirely new meaning to Christianity:

Germany – that is the Jerusalem for mankind today. To there with expectation and with hope must man turn his gaze; from there will come again Christ, but now not persecuted, not covered with the sores of torture, not with the crown of thorns, but

¹⁹ *Belinsky Pis'ma*, *op. cit.*, I, 19-20.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, I, 46.

²¹ Belinski, *Literaturnyye Mechtaniya*, in V. G. Belinski, *Estetika i Literaturnaya Kritika*, O. S. Voytinska (ed.), 2 vols., Moscow, 1949, I, 63-64. See also his attack on "magnetism and fanaticism" in his letter to K. S. Aksakov, 21 June 1837. *Belinsky Pis'ma*. I. *op. cit.*. 74-75.

²² Knyaz' N. N. Yengalyrev, "Vissarion Grigor'yevich Belinsky," *Russkaya Starina*, XV (1876), 77. N. A. Argillander, "Vissarion Grigor'yevich Belinsky" (1880), *Belinsky v Vospominaniyakh Sovremennikov*, *op. cit.*, 69

²³ N. K. Kozmin, *Nikolay Ivanovich Nadezhdin*, S: Peterburg, 1912, 255. Pypin, *Belinsky yego Zhizn' i Perepiska*, *op. cit.*, 85-86. P. Prozorov, "Belinsky i Moskovskiy Universitet v yego Vremya" (1859), in *Belinsky v Vospominaniyakh Sovremennikov*, *op. cit.*, 79-80. M. Polyakov, "Studentskiye Gody Belinskago" *Literaturnoye Nasledstvo*, LVI, 303-416. Vengerov, *Epokha Belinskago*, *op. cit.*, 5.6.

²⁴ Belinsky to his brother Constantine, 21 June 1832 or 1833, *Belinsky Pis'ma*, *op. cit.*, I, 41. Belinsky to P. P. and O. S. Ivanovna, 10 September, 1832, *ibid.*, I, 42. Belinski, *Literaturnyye Mechtaniya, Estetika i Literaturnaya Kritika*, *op. cit.*, I, 44-45.

²⁵ Belinsky to D. P. Ivanov, 7 August, 1837, *Belinsky Pis'ma*, *op. cit.*, I, 88-89.

in the light of glory. Until now Christianity has been true in contemplation, in word; it was faith. Now it must be truth in consciousness – in philosophy. Yes, the philosophy of the Germans is clear and definite, like mathematics. The development and explanation of Christian teaching, as a teaching, is based on the idea of love and the idea of the raising of man to the divinity, by means of consciousness.²⁶

The appearance of Christ through the light of German metaphysics did not mean a rejection of traditional Christianity. Belinsky told Michael Bakunin in 1837 that while recuperating his health in the Caucasus, he read and reread the epistles of St. John,²⁷ and as late as March, 1840, when he was on the brink of rejecting German idealism in favor of French socialism and Feuerbachian atheism, he attacked pantheism, declared that the Bible was absolute truth, and that the immortality of the individual soul was the cornerstone of truth.²⁸

Belief in Christianity was accompanied with an aversion to its Roman Catholic form. When Bakunin upbraided him for his irregular life, Belinsky described such puritanical censoriousness as the religion of the Vatican, the symbol of which was the Apostle Peter with sword in hand.²⁹ He held that religion in the middle ages, with its rejection of human pleasures, was a distortion, and said that he had always “wildly hated” and would “die hating” the Catholic element in Schiller’s “Maid of Orleans.”³⁰ Nor did he admire the Russian Orthodox Church, whose priests in their conduct “insulted religion.”³¹

True religion, for Belinsky, was approached through art. Just as fast and repentance prepared the Christian for Communion, so did art prepare a man for philosophy.³² “Art gives one religion, or truth in contemplation, because religion is truth in contemplation, while philosophy is truth in consciousness.”³³ Comedy as a form of art had the highest philosophical and religious meaning; more than laughter at vice, comedy was an art which raised man to an awareness of his dignity.³⁴ Belinsky admired Gogol not only for his extraordinary comic genius, but for the moral and religious importance of his presentation of Russian reality.³⁵ Both in his religious-idealistic phase in the 1830’s and in his

²⁶ *Ibid.*, I, 96.

²⁷ Belinsky to M. A. Bakunin, 16 August, 1837, *ibid.*, I, 126.

²⁸ Belinsky to V. P. Botkin, 1 March, 1840, *ibid.*, II, 70. He discussed personal immortality also in letters to M. A. Bakunin, 16 August, 1838, *ibid.*, I, 222-223, to V. P. Botkin, 3 February, 1840, *ibid.*, II, 30, and to the same 5 September, 1840, *ibid.*, II, 159.

²⁹ Belinsky to M. A. Bakunin, 1 November, 1837, *ibid.*, I, 142. Belinsky found it most difficult to live in the realm of the pure Idea. See same to same 16 August, 1837, *ibid.*, I, 122-125; same to same 21 November, 1837, *ibid.*, I, 171.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, I, 347-348.

³¹ *Ibid.*, II, 44.

³² Belinsky to D. P. Ivanov, 7 August, 1837, *ibid.*, I, 89-90.

³³ *Ibid.*, 90.

³⁴ Belinski, *Literaturnyye Mechtaniya, Estetika i Literaturnaya Kritika*, *op. cit.*, I, 65.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, I, 111. Belinsky, “O Russkoy Povesti i Povestyakh. g. Gogolya” (1835), *Estetika i Literaturnaya Kritika*, *op. cit.*, II, 25. Belinsky, “Petrovskiy Teatr” (1838), *ibid.*, II, 529. I. I. Paneyev to Belinsky, 16 July, 1838, *Belinsky i yego Korrespondenty*, *op. cit.*, 196. Belinsky to K. S. Aksakov, 10 January, 1840, Belinsky Pis'ma, *op. cit.*, II, 24-25. Belinsky to V. P. Botkin, February, 1840, *ibid.*, II, 56-57, same to same, 11 December, 1840, *ibid.*, II, 192-193.

atheist-realistic period in the 1840's, Belinsky regarded Gogol as the most talented writer of contemporary Russia. Works such as *The Inspector* and *Dead Souls* in their revelation of human weakness and of corruption among members of the bureaucracy especially endeared Gogol to him. Both critic and author hated social evils, and believed the artist had an obligation to use his skills to improve the condition of humanity.³⁶

Gogol's exact pictures of Russian life represented that "realism" which pleased Belinsky at all stages of his intellectual development. This is not surprising in view of the humanitarianism and individualism in his thought. It is true that in the thirties he loved to talk in Hegelian terminology of the general idea, that he spoke highly of tsars and of religion, and that he attacked French social thought, while in the forties he praised the French over the Germans, adopted socialist notions and preached political and social equality. The contrast was real enough to Belinsky himself, but is not so apparent to the modern reader. He was never content with the Hegelian quietism which Bakunin had taught him. If he celebrated rulers, it was such supposed promoters of enlightenment and human welfare as Peter the Great, Catherine the Second and Alexander the First. Men should have, he thought, a burning conviction of their own moral worth, and at the same time should be ready to change their views in accordance with their mental progress. He always resented the "mystical" or the "fantastic," and was ready enough to condemn the backwardness of Nicholas's Russia – especially the stupidity of censors, the mental obliquity of conservative writers, and the difficulty of survival for the progressive journalist.³⁷

Besides his humanitarianism, Belinsky's enthusiasm was another lasting feature to his personality. He could never follow the golden mean, as he recognized himself when he told a friend in the summer of 1839 that "all my life I am either in profound sadness and poetic gloom or in a stupid, wild state of joy."³⁸ He passed in 1839 from the position when he

³⁶ Belinsky to Gogol, 20 April, 1842, *ibid.*, II, 310. Belinsky, "Pokhozheniya Chichikova" (1842), *Estetika i Literaturnaya Kritika, op. cit.*, I, 604. Belinsky, "Rech' o Kritike" (1842), *ibid.*, I, 674-675. Belinsky, "Bibliograficheskoye Izvestiye" (1842), *Polnoye Sobraniye Sochineniy, op. cit.*, VI (1955), 347. Belinsky, "Ob'yasneniye na Ob'yasneniye Po Povodu Poemy Gogolya 'Mertvyye Dushi'" (1842) *ibid.*, VI, 410-433. Belinsky, "Russkaya Literatura v 1842 godu" (1843), *ibid.*, VI, 527. Belinsky, "Russkaya Literatura v 1843 godu" (1844), *ibid.*, VIII (1955), 78-81. Belinsky, "Vstupliniye k 'Fisiologii Peterburga'" (written about 1844, printed for first time in 1913), *ibid.*, VIII, 378. Belinsky, "Peterburgskiy vershinnyy" (1845), *ibid.*, IX (1955), 355. Belinsky, "Pokhozheniya Chichikova" (1847), *Estetika i Literaturnaya Kritika, op. cit.*, II, 612.

³⁷ Belinski, *Literaturnyye Mechtaniya, Estetika i Literaturnaya Kritika, op. cit.*, I, 67. Belinsky, "Syn Zheny Moey" (1835), *Polnoye Sobraniye Sochineniy, op. cit.*, I, 234. Belinsky to K. S. Aksakov, 14 August, 1837, *Belinsky Pis'ma, op. cit.*, I, 103. Belinsky to M. A. Bakunin, 21 November, 1837, *ibid.*, I, 173-176. Belinsky to A. P. Yefremov, 1 August, 1838, *ibid.*, I, 207. Belinsky to M. A. Bakunin, 1 August, 1838, *ibid.*, I, 208.209. Same to same, 14 August, 1838, *ibid.*, I, 219-221. Same to same, 10 September, 1838, *ibid.*, I, 231. Same to same, 12 October, 1838, *ibid.*, I, 269 and 272. Belinsky to V. P. Botkin, 1839, *ibid.*, I, 323. Belinsky to N. V. Stankevich, 2 October, 1839, *ibid.*, I, 348-349. Belinsky to V. P. Botkin 22 November, 1839, *ibid.*, II, 5.

³⁸ Belinsky to V. P. Botkin, 1839, *ibid.*, I, 328.

could write an essay on the importance of grace for penetrating into God,³⁹ to an admission in October, 1840, that he could no longer believe in the immortality of the soul.⁴⁰ In 1840 he experienced a spiritual crisis. His friend and guide, the philosopher Stankevich, had died; conditions of life in bureaucratically-dominated St. Petersburg he found unbearable, while he discovered socialism as seen in the Saint-Simonians and in Heine more satisfying than Hegelianism. Russia he described as materially impoverished and spiritually corrupt. He felt his soul to be empty, as he turned against his “rotten reconciliation” with “rotten reality,” and entered into what he called, because of its absence of religion, a period of negation.⁴¹

With his denial of idealism, came a negation of the whole Russian political and social order. Always concerned with the “condition of woman question,” he turned vigorously now against Christian marriage, to anticipate the radical feminist ideas of Chernyshevsky and the “Generation of the Sixties.”⁴² Reason for Belinsky became the “age of the enlightenment” type of criticism. The negative, that which was destructive of evil, was, he maintained, a positive approach to recreate society.⁴³ “The human personality has become the point,” he confessed, “about which I am afraid I shall lose my mind. I have begun to love mankind like Marat: in order to make happy the smallest portion of it, I, it seems, would with fire and sword annihilate the remainder.”⁴⁴ Admitting his propensity to extreme positions, he told a friend in September, 1841, that socialism had now become for him “the idea of ideas, the being of beings, the question of questions, the alpha and omega of belief and knowledge. Everything is from it, for it and leads to it. It is the question and the resolution of questions.

³⁹ Belinsky, “Serdstse Cheloveskoye...” (1839), *Polnoye Sobraniye Sochineniy*, op. cit., III (1953), 77-78.

⁴⁰ Belinsky to V. P. Botkin, 4 October, 1840, *Belinsky Pis'ma*, op. cit., II, 166

⁴¹ Belinsky to V. P. Botkin, 3 February, 1840, *ibid.*, II, 26. Same to same, 16 April, 1840, *ibid.*, II, 99-100. Same to same, 13 June, 1840, *ibid.*, II, 129, 132. Same to same, 12 August, 1840, *ibid.*, II, 141-142. Belinsky to K. S. Aksakov, 23 August, 1840, *ibid.*, II, 154. Belinsky to V. P. Botkin, 4 October, 1840, *ibid.*, II, 163. Same to same, 11 December, 1840, *ibid.*, II, 186-188. Belinsky, “O Detskikh Knigakh” (1840), *Polnoye Sobraniye Sochineniy*, op. cit., IV (1954), 74-75. K. S. Aksakov to I. S. Aksakov, c. 10 August, 1840, *Literaturnoye Nasledstvo*, LVI, 140. G. V. Plekhanov, “Belinsky i razumnaya deystvitel'nost'” in G. V. Plekhanov, *Sbornik Statey*, Moscow-Petrograd, 1923, 137-145. Gerston, *Byloye i Dumy*, in *Belinsky v Vospominaniyakh Sovremennikov*, op. cit., 111. S. E. Shchukin, *V. G. Belinsky i Sotsializm*, Moscow, 1929, 38-43. “Biblioteka Belinskago,” *Literaturnoye Nasledstvo*, LV, 550 and 569.

⁴² Belinsky, “Zhertva” (1835), *Polnoye Sobraniye Sochinye*, op. cit., I, 225-227. Belinsky to M. A. Bakunin, 10 September, 1838, *Belinsky Pis'ma*, op. cit., I, 234-235. Belinsky, “Gorye of Uma” (1840), *Estetika i Literaturnaya Kritika*, op. cit., I, 259. Belinsky to V. P. Botkin, 28 June, 1841, *Belinsky Pis'ma*, op. cit., II, 248-249. Belinsky, “Rech' o Kritike” (1842), *Estetika i Literaturnaya Kritika*, op. cit., I, 633. Belinsky, “Sochineniya Aleksandra Pushkina. Stat'ya Vtoraya” (1843), *ibid.*, II, 188, and “Stat'ya Devyataya” (1845), *ibid.*, II, 474.478. A. A. Bakunin to P. A. Bakunin, 3 March, 1847, *Literaturnoye Nasledstvo*, LVI, 188.

⁴³ Belinsky, “Geroy Nashego Vremeni” (1840), *Estetika i Literaturnaya Kritika*, op. cit., I, 360. Belinsky to V. P. Botkin, 15 January, 1841, *Belinsky Pis'ma*, op. cit., II, 203. Same to same, 1 March, 1841, *ibid.*, II, 218. Same to same, 28 June, 1841, *ibid.*, II, 246-247.

⁴⁴ Same to same, 28 June, 1841, *ibid.*, II, 247.

For me it has absorbed history, religion and philosophy.”⁴⁵ His God now was “negation,” and his heroes those who had destroyed old systems such as Luther, Voltaire, the encyclopaedists and the terrorists. Acknowledging great artistic achievement in the middle ages, he yet much preferred the eighteenth century as the age when religion collapsed, and looked forward to an even better day when love would reign supreme: there would be no husbands and wives but only lovers, there would be no poor and rich nor rulers and ruled but only brothers, and “the God Reason would rise in a new heaven, over a new land.”⁴⁶

Following the well-worn tradition of de Maistre and Saint-Simon that man’s psychology demanded a religion, Belinsky announced in 1842 that his negative period was over, and that he had now adopted a new religion, that of socialism.⁴⁷ Until his death in 1848, Belinsky advocated socialism in its French utopian variety. While he never systematically developed his social position, he attacked frequently western European capitalism, as well as the evils of Russian stagnation. He turned angrily against the Slavophiles in their romanticising of seventeenth century Russia, and continued to uphold Peter the Great’s reforms. Russia had had a dismal past, but could have a glorious future if it adhered to the progressive elements of western European civilization.⁴⁸

Like Belinsky, Gogol had also experienced intellectual changes, but of a different nature. Belinsky became disillusioned in German metaphysics and adopted atheistic socialism, while Gogol deepened in a religious faith which was there from his boyhood. Although many contemporaries believed that the artist noted for romantic epics, comedies and realistic social satires must have undergone some kind of “conversion,” Gogol himself denied it and his correspondence supports him.⁴⁹ His father having died when Nikolay was a school boy, he was much influenced by his mother, a beautiful, intelligent and religious woman who early persuaded her son of the truths of orthodox Christianity in full dogmatic

⁴⁵ Same to same, 8 September, 1841, *ibid.*, II, 262. In the same letter he professed egalitarianism, and related specific scenes of horror in Russian social life. *ibid.*, II, 266-267.

⁴⁶ *ibid.*, II, 267-268. His expressions in his articles were much more guarded than in his letters. In his articles at this time he praised “truth” and “criticism,” identified love of Russia with love for humanity, again praised Peter the Great, and spoke of the dignity of man and his relationship to society. Belinsky, “Russkaya Literatura v 1840 godu” (1841), *Polnoye Sobraniye Sochineniy, op. cit.*, IV (1954), 411. “Rossiya do Petra Velikogo” (1841), *ibid.*, V (1954), 91, 105, 119. “Stikhotvoreniya M. Lermontova” (1841), *Estetika i Literaturnaya Kritika, op. cit.*, I, 402-403, 415, 430. “Rech’ o Kritike” (1842), *ibid.*, I, 643, 684-685.

⁴⁷ Belinsky to Bakunin, 7 November, 1842, *Belinsky Pis'ma, op. cit.*, II, 317. V. P. Botkin had explained Feuerbach’s religious philosophy to Bakunin, 23 March, 1842, *ibid.*, editor’s remarks, II, 421.

⁴⁸ Belinsky, “Parizhskiye Tayny” (1844), *Estetika i Literaturnaya Kritika, op. cit.*, II, 88-90. Belinsky to V. P. Botkin, 8 March, 1847, *Belinsky Pis'ma, op. cit.*, *ibid.*, III, 196-197. Same to same, 7 July, 1847, *ibid.*, III, 244. Same to same, 5 November, 1847, *ibid.*, III, 276. Belinsky to K. D. Kavelin, 22 November, 1847, *ibid.*, III, 300. Belinsky to V. P. Botkin, December, 1847, *ibid.*, III, 326-329. Belinsky to P. V. Annenkov, 15 February, 1848, *ibid.*, III, 338-339.

⁴⁹ P. V. Annenkov asserted the later Gogol should not be identified with the earlier artist. Annenkov, *Literaturnyya Vospominaniya, op. cit.*, 27. See also Aksakov, *Istoriya Znakomstva s Gogolyem, op. cit.*, 46-48.

content. There is no question of Gogol having flirted with pantheism.⁵⁰

Gogol's religious faith is evident from his earliest letters to the year of his death in 1852.⁵¹ Whatever similarity there might have been in the ultimate objectives of the two men, a reading of their correspondence reveals two quite different personalities. Belinsky's letters with all their fire, superficiality, extremism and occasional lack of logic, are works of art exciting to read, while the task of reading Gogol's letters is a purgatory for an historian worse than having to read the English edition of Jeremy Bentham. No one could surpass Gogol's brilliant use of the Russian language or his wit in his plays and stories, but he rarely used this genius in his letters. Dull, plodding accounts of his stomach pains, his troubles with his publishers and the censors, his mild quarrels with his friends, his banal observations on conduct and religion, his letters would lead one to presume him to have been the greatest bore in that age of bores, the nineteenth century. Fortunately the memoirs of his associates prove him to have been a delightful fellow.⁵² Even as a boy he combined with an habitual melancholy, a propensity for pranks.⁵³ Gogol himself explained that his merriment was chiefly to divert himself from his sadness.⁵⁴ As he was to exclaim again and again, he ever had the high purpose of edification in his comedy, and the story is told that once when reading *Dead Souls* aloud to a gathering of friends, he was not much pleased with the laughter it occasioned.⁵⁵

From his school days Gogol, like Belinsky, sensed that he had a mission to serve his

⁵⁰ Shenrok, *Materialy dlya Biografii Gogolya*, *op. cit.*, I, 34, n. and I, 64. On Gogol's mother see N. A. Belozerskaya, "Mariya Ivanovna Gogo" 1794-1864. *Biograficheskiy Ocherk*," *Russkaya Starina*, LIII (1887), 667-710, and Aksakov, *Istoriya Znakomstva s Gogolyem*, *op. cit.*, 37-38, 71.72. For material on Gogol's ancestry see V. Veresiv, "K Biografii Gogolya," *Zven'ya*, II, "Academia," Moscow-Leningrad, 1933, 286-293.

⁵¹ For example Gogol to his mother, 23 April, 1825, V. I. Shenrok (ed.), *Pis'ma N. V. Gogolya*, 4 vols., S: Peterburg, 1901, I, 26. Same to same, 2 October, 1833, *ibid.*, I, 260. Same to same, 2 October, 1833, *ibid.*, I, 261. Same to same, 21 September, 1836, *ibid.*, I, 397. Same to same, 16 May, 1838, *ibid.*, I, 508. Same to same, 25 January, 1840, *ibid.*, II, 34. Gogol to his sister Anna, 1841, *ibid.*, II, 106. Gogol to N. M. Yazykov, 27 September, 1841, *ibid.*, II, 118. Gogol to M. P. Balabina, February, 1842, *ibid.*, II, 149. Gogol to O. S. Aksakova, 1842, *ibid.*, II, 211. Gogol to Countess A. M. Viel'gorska, 16 April, 1848, *ibid.*, III, 249. Gogol to his sister Ol'ga, 22 December, 1851, *ibid.*, IV, 415.

⁵² Some letters to Gogol are available in L. Lansky (ed.), "Neizdannyye Pis'ma k Gogolyu" *Literaturnoye Nasledstvo*, LVIII, 797-836. N.M. Yazkov, *Stikhotovoreniya, Skazki, Poemy, Dramaticheskiye Stseny, Pis'ma*, Moscow, 1959-1960, IV, 527-556. V.I. Shenrok (ed.), letters of Smirnova, *Russkaya Starina*, LXVI (1890), 639-656, LXVII (1890), 195-212, 279-291, LXVIII (1890), 353-364, and *ibid.*, 655-664.

⁵³ For examples of his prankish nature see Shenrok, *Materialy dlya Biografii Gogolya*, *op. cit.*, I, 84-85, his "joke letter" written to a Russian lady, *Russkiy Arkhiv*, V (1867), 473-479, remarks by Gogol in a lady's album, *Russkaya Starina*, 11 (1870), 528. For his melancholic poem "Nepogoda" (1827) see Nikolay Tikhonravov (ed.), *Sochineniya N. V. Gogolya*, 10th edition, 7 vols., Moscow, 1889-1896, VI (1896), 1.

⁵⁴ Gogol to V. A. Zhukovsky, 10 January, 1848, *ibid.*, IV (1889), 280.

⁵⁵ Annenkov, *Literaturnyya Vospominaniya*, *op. cit.*, 12.

fatherland and humanity. He believed at first he could do this in government service, but soon became disgusted with the bureaucracy in St. Petersburg and turned to literature.⁵⁶ His success was immediate, and at once he became acquainted with the most outstanding literary figures in Russia, including Pushkin, who influenced the development of Gogol's realism.⁵⁷ Aware of his talent, Gogol believed, in common with the still prevailing romanticism of the time, that the artist had some special contact with the divine.⁵⁸ His comedy on bribe-taking petty officialdom, *The Inspector*, brought him public acclaim in 1836,⁵⁹ as well as the hostility of officialdom, much to his surprise and disappointment.⁶⁰ Shortly thereafter he left for Rome, where for some time he had wanted to travel. The reasons are not clear; he was in poor health, he always felt uncomfortable in Russia, and he loved the sunshine, architecture and people of Italy. He claimed that God had inspired him to go to Rome, but his Slavophilic friends could not agree that God had asked one of Russia's leading men of letters to abandon his native soil.⁶¹ When he returned to Russia in 1840, he longed to go back to Rome, and soon did, where he felt renewed health and hope.⁶² It was in Rome that he wrote his masterpiece, *Dead Souls*, where the distance from Russia gave him, he said, a better perspective of the country as a whole. He returned to Russia for a short time in 1842 to look after publishing problems, but felt like a stranger, fought with the censors, and again returned to his beloved Rome.⁶³

⁵⁶ Gogol to Peter Petrovich Kosyrovsky, 3 October, 1827, *Pis'ma N. V. Gogolya, op. cit.*, I, 89. Gogol to his mother, 13 November, 1827, *ibid.*, I, 93. Same to same, 24 July, 1829, *ibid.*, I, 124-125.

⁵⁷ V. Malinin, "Zadachi Khudozhestvennago Tvorchestva N. V. Gogolya," in *Pamyati N. V. Gogolya. Sbornik Rechey i Stacey*, Kiev, 1911, 30. Gogol to M. P. Pogodin, 30 March, 1837, *Pis'ma N. V. Gogolya, op. cit.*, I, 434-435. Pushkin gave Gogol the ideas for *The Inspector* and for *Dead Souls*, *ibid.*, editor's note 2, 434.

⁵⁸ Gogol "Boris Godunov" (1831), in *N. V. Gogol' Sobraniye Sochineniy*, 6 vols., Moscow, 1952-1953, VI, 9. Gogol "1834," *ibid.*, VI, 13-14.

⁵⁹ P. I. Grigor'yev to F. A. Koni, 20 April, 1836, "Gogol' v neizdannoy perepiske sovremennikov," *Literaturnoye Nasledstvo*, LVIII, 548. Aksakov, *Istoriya Znakomstva s Gogolyem*, op. cit., 13.

⁶⁰ Gogol to M. S. Shchepkin, 29 April, 1836, *Pis'ma N. V. Gogolya, op. cit.*, I, 368-369. Gogol to M. P. Pogodin, 10 May, 1836, *ibid.*, I, 370-371. Same to same, 15 May, 1836, *ibid.*, 378.

⁶¹ Gogol to his mother, 24 July, 1829, *ibid.*, I, 124. Gogol's poem "Italiya" (1829), *Sochineniya N. V. Gogolya, op. cit.*, V (1896), 44-45. Gogol to V. A. Zhukovsky, 28 June, 1836, *Pis'ma N. V. Gogolya, op. cit.*, I, 384. Gogol to N. Y. Prokopovich, 30 March, 1837, *ibid.*, I, 436. Gogol to A. S. Danilevsky, 1837, *ibid.*, I, 437-440. Gogol to his mother, 22 December, 1837, *ibid.*, I, 465. Gogol to M. P. Balabina, April, 1838, *ibid.*, I, 494-495. Gogol to A. S. Danilevsky, 30 June, 1838, *ibid.*, I, 516. Annenkov, *Literaturnaya Vospominaniya, op. cit.*, 38. Askakov, *Istoriya Znakomstva s Gogolyem*, 39.

⁶² Gogol to V. A. Zhukovsky, 1840, *Pis'ma N. V. Gogolya, op. cit.*, II, 31. Gogol to S. T. Aksakov, 28 December, 1840, *ibid.*, II, 90-91.

⁶³ Gogol to S. T. Aksakov, 5 March, 1841, *ibid.*, II, 98. Same to same, 13 March, 1841, *ibid.*, II, 100. Gogol to P. A. Pletnev, 7 January, 1842, *ibid.*, II, 136-137. Gogol to M. A. Maksimovich, 10 January, 1842, *ibid.*, II, 139. Gogol to M. P. Balabina, 1842, *ibid.*, II, 140. Gogol to P. A. Pletnev, 6 February, 1842, *ibid.*, II,

Gogol's discontent in Russia, his trips through western Europe and his long stays in Rome reflected a spiritual restlessness which resulted in a concern for his own spiritual development,⁶⁴ in a growing religious tone to his writings,⁶⁵ and eventually in a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.⁶⁶ He saw *Dead Souls* as only a pale beginning to a work which he hoped would solve, he said, "the riddle of my existence."⁶⁷ His original intention was not to ridicule people so much as it was to demonstrate the weakness of us all, including himself. He hoped in the second volume to present a more positive approach to the raising of man's spiritual level.⁶⁸ His health continued to trouble him,⁶⁹ but he prayed that God would give him enough moments of relief from his sufferings so that he could in his writings perform his religious tasks.⁷⁰ He was ready to discuss religion with anyone, but he especially liked to unburden himself both in correspondence and in person with some society ladies of mystical bent.⁷¹

In his studies, Gogol included religious writings. He read works of the church fathers,⁷² and of Russian religious thinkers, such as Stephan Yavorsky.⁷³ So much did he

142. Same to same, 17 March, 1842, *ibid.*, II, 156-157.

⁶⁴ Gogol to V. A. Zhukovsky, 26 June, 1842, *ibid.*, II, 184. Gogol to S. T. Aksakov, 18 August, 1842, *ibid.*, II, 206-208. Gogol to N. N. Sheremeteva, 6 February, 1843, *ibid.*, II, 251. Gogol to O. S. Aksakova, April, 1843, *ibid.*, II, 292-293. Gogol to A. S. Danilevsky, 20 June, 1843, *ibid.*, II, 317.

⁶⁵ For example his novel "Rome" (1842), *Sochineniy N. V. Gogolya, op. cit.*, II, 130-170. Gogol to S. P. Shevyrev, 1 September, 1843, *Pis'ma N. V. Gogolya, op. cit.*, II, 333.

⁶⁶ Gogol to N. N. Sheremetova, 24 December, 1842, *ibid.*, II, 247-248.

⁶⁷ Gogol to A. S. Danilevsky, 9 May, 1842, *ibid.*, II, 168.

⁶⁸ Gogol to A. O. Smirnova, 25 July, 1845, *ibid.*, III, 80-81. Same to same, 20 February, 1846, *ibid.*, III, 152-153. N. I. Korobka, "N. V. Gogol'," Osvianiko-Kulikovskiy (ed.), *Istoriya Russkoy Literatury XIX v., op. cit.*, II (1910), 321.

⁶⁹ *On Gogol's poor health see Aksakov, Istoriya Znakomstva s Gogolyem, op. cit.*, 11. Gogol to A. S. Danilevsky, 31 December, 1838, *Pis'ma N. V. Gogolya, op. cit.*, I, 555, and Gogol to his mother, 22 March, 1842, *ibid.*, II, 158.

⁷⁰ Gogol to V. A. Zhukovsky, 10 May, 1843, *ibid.*, II, 295. Gogol to N. N. Sheremetova, 14 February, 1845, *ibid.*, III, 28-29.

⁷¹ Aksakov, *Istoriya Znakomstva s Gogolyem, op. cit.*, 118-119. V. I. Shenrok, "A. O. Smirnova i N. V. Gogol' v 1829-1852 gg.," *Russkaya Starina*, LVIII (1888), 31-72. Gogol to N. M. Yazykov, 4 November, 1843, *Pis'ma N. V. Gogolya, op. cit.*, II, 359. Gogol to A. S. Danilevsky, 1844, *ibid.*, II, 418. Gogol to N. N. Sheremetova, 24 October, 1844, *ibid.*, II, 495. Gogol to P. A. Pletnev, 1844, *ibid.*, II, 524. Gogol to M. P. Pogodin, December, 1844, *ibid.*, II, 543. Gogol to A. O. Smirnova, 1845, *ibid.*, II, 550. Gogol to N. M. Yazykov, 12 February, 1845, *ibid.*, III, 21-22. Gogol to A. O. Smirnova, 24 February, 1845, *ibid.*, III, 24. S. T. Aksakov to I. S. Aksakov, 3 March, 1850, *Literaturnoye Nasledstvo*, LVIII, 728-730.

⁷² Gogol to N. M. Yazykov, 26 October, 1844, *Pis'ma N. V. Gogolya, op. cit.*, II, 497.

⁷³ Same to same, 8 October, 1843, *ibid.*, II, 351.

admire *The Imitation of Christ*, he sent copies to his friends,⁷⁴ while he was charmed with lyrics attributed to Francis of Assisi.⁷⁵ His interest in such Catholic theological writers as Bossuet⁷⁶ and Thomas Aquinas,⁷⁷ and his frequent discussions of the soul, created the suspicion he was a follower of Catholic mysticism;⁷⁸ this led him to deny he was mystical at all,⁷⁹ to describe his religious attitude in its lack of exultation and in its simplicity as being more Protestant than Catholic,⁸⁰ and to attack what he regarded as the authoritarianism of the Catholic priesthood.⁸¹

While literary friends warned him that his religious preoccupations were robbing him of his talent,⁸² Gogol continued to complain of his health, his spiritual “dryness,” his difficulty of finding words to express his religious thoughts, and his need to go to the Holy Land to seek strength.⁸³ It was in this mood that in 1847 he published *Selected Passages*

⁷⁴ Gogol to S. T. Aksakov, January, 1844, *ibid.*, II, 378. Gogol to S. T. Shevyrev, 2 February, 1844, *ibid.*, II, 380. Gogol to M. P. Pogodin, December, 1844, *ibid.*, II, 544.

⁷⁵ F. I. Buslayev, “Iz Moikh Vospominaniy” (1888-1891), *Gogol’ v Vospominaniyakh Sovremennikov*, *op. cit.*, 224.

⁷⁶ Gogol to A. O. Smirnova, 20 March, 1844, *Pisma N. V. Gogolya*, *op. cit.*, II, 408.

⁷⁷ Same to same, 16 May, 1844, *ibid.*, II, 445.

⁷⁸ In a letter to his mother, 22 December, 1837, Gogol declared that Orthodoxy and Catholicism were both true, *ibid.*, I, 464.465. He agreed with the common view of the time that the middle ages were characterized by superstition and intolerance—Gogol, “Skulptura, Zhivopis’ i Muzyka” (1831), *Sobraniye Sochineniy*, *op. cit.*, VI (1953), 20-21 – but recognized the importance of faith in the greatness of Gothic architecture. “Ob Arkhitekture Nyneshnego Vremeni” (1831), *ibid.*, VI (1953), 39-40. He contrasted the power of the Catholic church with the “retirement” of Orthodoxy in the thirteenth century, “Vzglyad Po Sostavleniye Malorossii” (1832), *Sochineniya N. V. Gogolya*, *op. cit.*, V (1889), 197-198, but appreciated fully the place of the middle ages in the development of civilization, “O Srednikh Vekakh” (1834), *ibid.*, V, 118-119, and saw the “papal despotism” of that period as part of God’s providential plan for preserving Europe from chaos until the appearance of the powerful state, *ibid.*, V, 121.122. He condemned the inquisition in strong terms, *ibid.*, V, 128. Part of the explanation for his love for Rome was the sincerity of its inhabitants’ religious practices, Gogol to M. P. Balabina, April, 1838, *Pis’ma N. V. Gogolya*, *op. cit.*, I, 492.

⁷⁹ Gogol to S. T. Aksakov, 16 May, 1844, *ibid.*, II, 435.

⁸⁰ Gogol to S. P. Shevyrev, 11 February, 1847, *ibid.*, III, 355.

⁸¹ Gogol to A. O. Smirnova, 26 August, 1844, *ibid.*, II, 470.

⁸² S. T. Aksakov to Gogol, 17 April, 1844, Aksakov, *Istoriya Znakomstva s Gogolyem*, *op. cit.*, 131. Gogol to Aksakov, 16 May, 1844, *ibid.*, 133-134. Gogol to Aksakov, 2 May, 1854, *Pis’ma N. V. Gogolya*, *op. cit.*, III, 54.

⁸³ Gogol to S. P. Shevyrev, 14 December, 1844, *ibid.*, II, 535. Gogol to Count A. P. Tolstoy, 29 March, 1845, *ibid.*, III, 32. Gogol to N. M. Yazykov, 5 April, 1845, *ibid.*, III, 44. Gogol to A. O. Smirnova, 4 June, 1845, *ibid.*, III, 6162. Gogol to N. M. Yazykov, 5 June, 1845, *ibid.*, III, 64. Gogol to his mother, 23 March, 1846, *ibid.*, III, 169.

From Letters with Friends, as the religious testimony of a man who was about to die.⁸⁴ He counselled his friends to read the book several times and to buy copies of it for the edification of those who couldn't afford to make the purchase. The money received would be used for charity on his way to the Holy Land and also would help others to make a similar pilgrimage when they had not the means.⁸⁵

The author might better have urged reading the book as a penance; artistically it is devoid of attraction; even from the religious point of view the content is of little interest.⁸⁶ He expressed his love for his contemporaries,⁸⁷ discussed the importance of the moral influence of women in society,⁸⁸ praised highly the Orthodox Church and its priesthood,⁸⁹ and defended the existing political autocracy.⁹⁰ Slavophiles and Westernisers both had faulty perspectives of Russia,⁹¹ what mattered was for Russians to follow the laws of Christ; then would western Europe look to Russia for wisdom.⁹² He was scornful of much of the talk of the radicals about "brotherhood," which he felt to be a love of one's fellows only in the abstract and did not really involve a sincere love for men. Only in Christianity could there be true brotherhood.⁹³ He deplored the quarreling, the confusion of opinions, the selfishness, the sinfulness of Russian society, where only rogues seemed united.⁹⁴

Criticism of conditions in Russia was part of his patriotism, Gogol maintained,⁹⁵ and proceeded to explain precisely how Russians should act, each in his own station, according to Christian principles. Russia should be considered a monastery, the place where one fulfils one's Christian obligations.⁹⁶ The landowner should gather his serfs together to explain to them the reasons for their subordination to his authority. It wasn't that the master wanted to rule, but that he had been born master as the peasants had been born serfs. He could not resign his office any more than they could free themselves from his authority: it had been so ordained by God. The landlord was to tell the peasants they worked for him not because he wanted their money, but because Holy Scripture had said man must earn his bread by the sweat of his brow. Then he was to show his peasants the relevant passage in the Bible. Moreover to prove his lack of interest in money, the master was to burn some bank notes

⁸⁴ *Vybrannyya Mesta Iz Perekpiski s Druzyami, Sochineniya N. V. Gogolya, op. cit.*, IV (1889), 3

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, IV, 4.

⁸⁶ A modern favorable assessment of the book is in Father Zenkovsky's, *History of Russian Philosophy*, where Gogol is called "the prophet of Orthodox culture," who more clearly than anyone else expressed the disintegration of moral and ethical humanism. V. V. Zenkovsky, *Istoriya Russkoy Filosofii*, 2 vols., Paris, 1948-1950, I, 181. Orthodox authorities as a whole did not accept the book. V. A. Desnitsky, "Zadachi Izucheniya Zhizni i Tvorchestva Gogolya," Gippius (ed.), *N. V. Gogol' Materialy i Issledovaniya*, II, 15-17.

⁸⁷ *Vybrannyya Mesta, Sochineniya N. V. Gogolya, op. cit.*, IV, 7-8.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, IV, 12-13 and 113-115.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, IV, 35-37, 77, 79, 112.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, IV, 50-52.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, IV, 53.

⁹² *Ibid.*, IV, 143-144.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, IV, 214-215.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, IV, 98-101.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, IV, 95.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, IV, 96.

in front of his serfs.⁹⁷ There was no need to concern oneself unduly about peasant education; the serfs would return home too tired from their labors for other than sleep, and moreover had no need to read worthless books. The landowner could, however, direct into religious channels the education of exceptional children.⁹⁸ On the other hand, Gogol gave no sanction for brutality; peasants were to be treated as one's children, as Christians, and not as slaves.⁹⁹

Gogol's advice to accept the existing social order, but live like Christians, was out of tune with the public mood, restive under an anachronistic political and social structure, and attracted, like Belinsky himself, to socialism, or to the romance of Slavophilism. Opposition to the book was general,¹⁰⁰ with the exception of some arch conservatives, who had earlier been Gogol's opponents.¹⁰¹ The more charitable of the book's opponents regarded it as the work of a sick man,¹⁰² but he was accused commonly of self-love in daring to lecture his contemporaries in such fashion.¹⁰³ An old friend, the novelist Sergei Aksakov, who had tried to prevent the publication of the book, declared simply that Gogol had gone mad.¹⁰⁴

It was to be expected that radical westernisers should turn against Gogol, but many Slavophiles also rejected his book.¹⁰⁵ While Gogol had never joined the Slavophiles, he had sympathised with their viewpoint,¹⁰⁶ was a frequent visitor at their homes, and numbered some of them as his warmest supporters since the thirties.¹⁰⁷ Among the harshest things said

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, IV, 118-119.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, IV, 121-122.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, IV, 161-162.

¹⁰⁰ Shenrok, *Materialy dlya Biografii Gogolya*, *op. cit.*, IV (1897), 560-561.

¹⁰¹ A. A. Grigor'yev to Gogol c. 14 October, 1848, Grigor'yev, *Materialy dlya Biografii*, *op. cit.*, 110.

¹⁰² V. P. Botkin to P. V. Annenkov, 28 February, 1847, *P. V. Annenkov i yego Druz'ya*, S: Peterburg, 1892, 529-530.

¹⁰³ P. A. Pletnev to Y. K. Grot, 4 January, 1847, K. Y. Grot (ed.), *Perepiska Y. K. Grot s P. A. Pletnevym*, 3 vols., S: Peterburg, 1896, III, 3. P. A. Pletnev to V. A. Zhukovsky, 3 April, 1847, *Russkiy Arkhiv*, VIII (1870), 1292.

¹⁰⁴ S. T. Aksakov to P. A. Pletnev, 20 November, 1846, Aksakov, *Istoriya Znakomstva s Gogolyem*, *op. cit.*, 160. S. T. Aksakov to I. S. Aksakov, 26 August, 1846, *Istoriya Znakomstva s Gogolyem*, *op. cit.*, 161-164. S. T. Aksakov to Gogol, 9 December, 1846, *Istoriya Znakomstva s Gogolyem*, *op. cit.*, 161-164. S. T. Aksakov to I. S. Aksakov, 1847, *ibid.*, 164. S. T. Aksakov to Gogol, 27 January, 1847, *ibid.*, 170-171. S. T. Aksakov to I. S. Aksakov, 8 February, 1847, *N. V. Gogol' Materialy i Issledovaniya*, *op. cit.*, I, 179. S. T. Aksakov to S. P. Shevyrev, 15 December, 1847, *ibid.*, I, 182-183. Any break between Gogol and Sergei Aksakov was short-lived. See S. T. Aksakov to I. S. Aksakov, 10 January, 1850, *ibid.*, I, 184. On Gogol and the Aksakovs see S. Durylin, "Gogol' i Aksakovy," *Zven'ya*, vols. III-IV, "Academia" Moscow-Leningrad, 1934, 325-364.

¹⁰⁵ Nikolay Barsukov (ed.), *Zhizn' i Trudy M. P. Pogodina*, VIII, S.-Peterburg, 1894, 522. V. P. Botkin to P. V. Annenkov, 20 March, 1847, *P. V. Annenkov i yego Druz'ya*, *op. cit.*, 533.

¹⁰⁶ Shenrok, *Materialy dlya Biografii Gogolya*, *op. cit.*, IV (1897), 617.

¹⁰⁷ K. S. Aksakov to M. G. Kartashevskaya, 9 May, 1836, *Literaturnoye Nasledstvo*, LVIII, 550. K. S. Aksakov to G. S. and I. S. Aksakov c. 30 September, 1839, *ibid.*, LVIII, 564. Same to same, 24-25 October, 1839, *ibid.*, LVIII, 570. A. S. Khomiakov to N. M. Yazykov, 4 April, 1841, A. S. Khomiakov, *Polnoye Sobraniye*

to Gogol were written by that former associate of Belinsky who had become the leader of the Slavophiles, Constantine Aksakov.¹⁰⁸ The work was a lie, Aksakov declared, deploring its patronizing tone to the peasantry.¹⁰⁹ Gogol, who had spent most of his time in Catholic Rome, and who planned to seek truth in Jerusalem or anywhere than in Orthodox Russia, was, according to Aksakov, infected with the evil of the west.¹¹⁰

While many criticised Gogol both privately and in print,¹¹¹ no attack was so renowned as Belinsky's letter. Ever since 1842 when Belinsky clearly had entered the atheist camp and Gogol had become more intensely religious, the relations between the two men had been strained.¹¹² Belinsky at once described Gogol's *Selected Passages* as "calculated baseness,"¹¹³ and said he was overjoyed at its failure.¹¹⁴ In a public review he remarked that the only value of the book was as a weapon against pride, in showing from what great heights a man could fall.¹¹⁵ Gogol pictured himself, Belinsky wrote, as a *curé du village*, or the pope of his own little Catholic world, obliging us to listen to him and to follow his advice.¹¹⁶ Among Gogol's mistakes was his failure to see the need and the desire of the Russian people for education. If he had only read the report of state institutions for 1846 he would have seen how rapidly elementary education was spreading in Russia.¹¹⁷ Finally Belinsky remarked on the tragedy of the artist turning away from art to follow a different path, and cited the well-known Krylov proverb:

"How unfortunate when a shoemaker begins to bake pies, while the pie-maker sets himself to mending shoes."¹¹⁸

The adverse reaction to his book deeply hurt Gogol, who wrote a friend that his purpose was simply to instruct in their Christian duties peasants and landowners within

Sochineniy Alekseye Stepanovicha Khomiakova, VIII, Moscow, 1904, 98. A. S. Khomiakov to A. N. Popov, February, 1852, *ibid.*, 200-201. E. M. Khomiakova to A. S. Khomiakov, 1 April, 1842, *ibid.*, 106-107. Gogol to K. S. Aksakov, undated (between 1845 and 1847), *Pis'ma N. V. Gogolya, op. cit.*, IV, 148. F. V. Chizhov, "Vstrechi s Gogolyem" (1856), *Gogol' v Vospominaniyakh Sovremennikov, op. cit.*, 229.

¹⁰⁸ N. M. Pavlov, "Gogol' i Slavyanofily," *Russkiy Arkhiv* (1890), I, 152.

¹⁰⁹ K. S. Aksakov to Gogol, undated, 1848, *ibid.*, 153-154.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 154-155.

¹¹¹ Barsukov, *Zhizn' i Trudy M. P. Pogodina, op. cit.*, VIII, 573-574.

¹¹² Pypin, *Belinsky, op. cit.*, 152. Belinsky to V. P. Botkin, 31 March, 1842, *Belinsky Pis'ma, op. cit.*, II, 291. Belinsky to A. I. Gertsen, 6 April, 1846, *ibid.*, III, 108. Belinsky, "Pokhozhdeniya Chichikova" (1847), *Estetika i Literaturnaya Kritika, op. cit.*, II, 612-613.

¹¹³ Belinsky to V. P. Botkin, 28 February, 1847, *Belinsky Pis'ma, op. cit.*, III, 185-186.

¹¹⁴ Same to same, 15 March, 1847, *ibid.*, III, 197-198.

¹¹⁵ Belinsky, "Vybrannyye Mesta" (1847), *Estetika i Literaturnaya Kritika, op. cit.*, II, 615.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, II, 617.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, II, 624.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, II, 632.

Russia, not to offend literary figures such as Belinsky.¹¹⁹ The almost uniform cries against the book came as a punishment from God, Gogol declared, but added he was gratified for the lesson in humility.¹²⁰ Belinsky's criticisms especially concerned him; it was painful to see such hard words from one who had for more than ten years been his most enthusiastic champion. The attack was personal and rested on a short-sighted view of his book, Gogol held, and he told Belinsky he should read the work several times.¹²¹

It was this defense which aroused the dying Belinsky to his last great outburst of energy: his "Letter to Gogol."¹²² "Yes I did love you with all the passion which a man tied by blood to his country could love the hope, honor and glory given to her by one of its great leaders on the path of knowledge, development, progress." But what a fall! "I am not in the condition," Belinsky continued, "to give you even the smallest understanding of that indignation to which your book has given rise in all noble hearts."¹²³

Gogol knew Russia only as an artist, and not as a thinking man, Belinsky argued. From afar Gogol could not have been aware that Russia saw her salvation "not in mysticism, not in asceticism, not in pietism, but in the success of civilization, in enlightenment, in humanism." Russia had had enough of preaching and of praying, what it needed now was the awakening in the people of a sense of human dignity. The real questions that bothered Russia now were the elimination of serfdom and the humanization of the laws, and yet how strange that the great writer whose powerful creations had so accurately depicted Russian conditions should in the name of Christ and the church advocate the continuation of the barbarous type of landowner-serf relationships.¹²⁴

Propagator of the knout, apostle of ignorance, defender of obscure antism and reaction, panegyrist of Tartar morality – what are you doing!¹²⁵

Gogol's defense of the Orthodox Church, always the "supporter of the knout" and of despotism, was absurd. Christ taught freedom, equality and fraternity, which are principles contrary to church Christianity. The Christianity of the church was not Christianity at all, Belinsky claimed. Only the philosophy of the enlightenment had opened the true teaching of Christ.¹²⁶ Voltaire was more the son of Christ "than all your priests."¹²⁷

And really do you not know this! Really is this news for any humanist? ... And why, really, do you, the author of *The Inspector and of Dead Souls*, why do you really, sincerely, from your heart, sing hymns to the rotten Russian priesthood,

¹¹⁹ Gogol to A. O. Rosset, 11 February, 1847, *N. V. Gogol; Materialy i Issledovaniya*, *op. cit.*, I, 72.

¹²⁰ Gogol to Father Matvey, 9 May, 1847, *Pis'ma N. V. Gogolya*, *op. cit.*, III, 460.

¹²¹ Gogol to N. Y. Prokopovich, 20 June, 1847, *ibid.*, III, 495-496. Prokopovich gave the letter to N. N. Tyutchev, who sent the substance of it to Belinsky on 22 June, 1847. Brodsky (ed.), *Belinsky i yego Korrespondenty*, *op. cit.*, 278. Gogol to Belinsky c. 20 June, 1847, *Pis'ma N. V. Gogolya*, *op. cit.*, III, 491-493.

¹²² A. I. Gerston, *Byloye i Dumy* (1855), in *Belinsky v Vospominaniyakh Sovremennikov*, *op. cit.*, 116.

¹²³ *Belinsky Pis'ma*, *op. cit.*, III, 230.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, III, 231-232.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, III, 232.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, III, 232-233.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, III, 233.

placing them immeasurably higher than the Catholic priesthood? ... In your opinion the Russian people are the most religious in the world. That is a lie! ... Look more carefully and you will see that by nature they are a deeply atheistic people.¹²⁸

The oppressed Russian public looked to its writers as its leaders against reaction, and was more ready to forgive a bad book than an evil work. This was why Gogol's volume had failed, and, Belinsky told its author, "if you love Russia, rejoice with me in the failure of your book."¹²⁹

You understand neither the soul nor the form of the Christianity of our era. Not true Christian teaching, but the sickly dread of death, of the devil and of hell breathes from your book.¹³⁰

Such was the most famous article Belinsky ever wrote. All the young members of the Russian reading public immediately became familiar with the letter, through the circulation of handwritten copies.¹³¹ Ivan Aksakov wrote in 1856 that there was no student who did not know Belinsky's letter by heart,¹³² and Russian scholars to the present day have stressed the place of the document in the development of Russian social thought.¹³³

When he received Belinsky's letter, Gogol was furious, and dashed off a reply that matched the critic's eloquence. Belinsky's letter showed a complete misunderstanding of his book and of Russia itself; the letter was marked with hatred and with ignorance. Belinsky had proffered the superficial Voltaire as a better Christian than church fathers, who had been martyred for Christ; Russia was to be saved by some sort of fantastic western European Communist scheme; the Russian peasant who had shown his piety through building thousands of churches and by giving endless examples of his devotion was presented as an atheist. Not through listening to journalists, Gogol insisted, but by each man fulfilling his obligations would Russia make progress.¹³⁴

This answer Gogol never mailed, but in his genuine Christian sense of humility and of reconciliation sent instead a mild, kindly letter, telling Belinsky how much his letter had affected him, and admitting that his criticisms had some truth in them. It was an age of change; both of them were children before the challenges of the era, and both of them had been excessive in propagating his own point of view. He urged Belinsky to consider his health, to avoid contemporary questions until he was rested and could then tackle them afresh.¹³⁵

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, III, 233.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, III, 236.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, III, 239.

¹³¹ G. P. Danilevsky, "Znakomstvo s Gogolyem" (1886), *Gogol' v Vospominaniyakh Sovremennikov*, *op. cit.*, 436.

¹³² I. S. Aksakov to K. S. Aksakov, 17 September, 1856, *Ivan Sergeevich Aksakov v yego Pis'makh*, 4 vols., Moscow, 1888-1896, III (1892), 281.

¹³³ Barsukov, *Zhizn' i Trudy M. P. Pogodina*, *op. cit.*, VIII, 596. I. Uspensky, "Pis'mo Belinskogo k Gogolyu i L. N. Tolstoy," Brodsky (ed.), *Belinsky*, *op. cit.*, 343. K. Bogayevska, "Pis'mo Belinskogo k Gogolyu," *Literaturnoye Nasledstvo*, LVI, 513-569.

¹³⁴ Gogol to Belinsky c. 10 August, 1847, *Pis'ma N. V. Gogolya*, *op. cit.*, IV, 32-41.

¹³⁵ Gogol to Belinsky, 10 August, 1847, R. Kantor, "Pis'mo N. V. Gogolya k V. G. Belinskomy," *Krasnyy Arkhiv*, III (1923), 309-312. The letter is 311-312.

Neither Gogol nor Belinsky would change his views. Gogol discussed his book again and again, defending his religious position, and reviewing the history of his writings to explain his religious development.¹³⁶ His letters continued to be filled with religious reflections and advice,¹³⁷ and his going to Jerusalem finally in 1848 marked no change in his attitude.¹³⁸ He wrote some religious additions to earlier works, such as *The Inspector*, and continued to work on the second half of *Dead Souls*,¹³⁹ until he burned it as inadequate at his death bed, but his artistic gifts, if rarely used because of his health and religious preoccupations, had not altogether left him.¹⁴⁰

If Gogol's humble reply to Belinsky's attack is a tribute to his unique attempts to follow Christian teachings to the letter, it must be acknowledged that Belinsky never wavered in his defense of Gogol's literary abilities.¹⁴¹ The conflict between Gogol and Belinsky was a division between two writers both of whom were psychologically of passionate religious inclination. Both propagated what he considered to be Christianity: the one the "new Christianity" of French socialism, the other a traditional, dogmatic Christianity. Both looked to the betterment of the Russian people, neither was content with contemporary conditions, and the government censors who on Gogol's death in 1852 regarded him as the "chief of the Liberal party" among Russian men of letters, were not so far from the truth as it might appear.¹⁴² It was Belinsky's solution to Russian problems which was to become popular among the Russian intelligentsia, but the new interest in religion at the end of the nineteenth century shows the existence of a deep current of Christian thought in Russia, of which Gogol was one of the main springs. And in view of the Soviet experience, who is there to say that Gogol was entirely wrong?

¹³⁶ Gogol to P. A. Pletnev, 24 August, 1847, *Pis'ma N. V. Gogolya, op. cit.*, IV, 61. Gogol to S. T. Aksakov, 28 August, 1847, *ibid.*, IV, 65. Gogol to Count A. P. Tolstoy, c. 14 August, 1847, *ibid.*, IV, 74. Gogol to V. A. Zhukovsky, 22 December, 1847, *ibid.*, IV, 135-141. Gogol to Father Matvey, 12 January, 1848, *ibid.*, IV, 151-154. Gogol, *Avtorskaya ispoved'* (1847), *Sochineniya N. V. Gogolya, op. cit.*, IV, 239-278. Gogol to V. A. Zhukovsky, 10 January, 1848, *ibid.*, IV, 283.

¹³⁷ Gogol to his sister Ol'ga, 20 January, 1847, *Pis'ma N. V. Gogolya, op. cit.*, III, 323-326. Gogol to P. V. Annenkov, August, 1847, *ibid.*, IV, 70. Gogol to A. O. Smirnova, 20 November, 1847, *ibid.*, IV, 95.

¹³⁸ Gogol to N. N. Sheremetova, 16 May, 1848, *ibid.*, IV, 190. Gogol to Countess S. M. Sollogub, 24 May, 1849, N. V. *Gogol' Materialy i Issledovaniya, op. cit.*, I, 81-82. Gogol, *Razmyshleniya o Bozhestvennoy Literaturgii, Sochineniya N. V. Gogolya, op. cit.*, IV, 409-464.

¹³⁹ Gogol, Popolneniye k "Razvyazne Revizora" (c. 1847), *ibid.*, VI (1896), 259-264.

¹⁴⁰ S. T. Aksakov to I. S. Aksakov, 20 January, 1850, Aksakov, *Istoriya Znakomstva s Gogolyem, op. cit.*, 204-205. L. I. Arnol'di, "Moye Znakomstvo s Gogolyem" (1862), *Gogol v Vospominaniyakh Sovremennikov, op. cit.*, 487-488. I. S. Aksakova to M. G. Kartashevskaya, 29 August, 1849, *Literaturnoye Nasledstvo*, LVIII, 719.

¹⁴¹ Belinsky to K. D. Kavelin, 7 December, 1847, *Belinsky Pis'ma, op. cit.*, III, 312. Belinsky, "Sovremennyye Zametki" (1847), *Polnoye Sobraniye Sochineniy, op. cit.*, X (1956), 177-180. Belinsky, "Vzglyad Na Russkuyu Literaturu 1847 goda" (1848), *Estetika i Literaturnaya Kritika, op. cit.*, II, 656-660, 664, 719.

¹⁴² D. Obolensky, "O Pervom Izdanii Posmertnykh Sochineniy Gogolya. Vospominaniya Kn. D. Obolenskago," *Russkaya Starina*, VIII (1873), 949.