

PUSHKIN IN A FOREIGN EDITION

A Critical and Literary Evaluation of
the Leipzig Edition 1859

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ABSTRACT

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In the whole field of Pushkiniana there is no other aspect as much neglected as the study of foreign editions of Alexander Sergeevich Pushkin. Yet foreign editions of Pushkin are so numerous that a comprehensive study would be justified. Such study should embrace not translations of the poet but editions in the Russian language only.

One of such editions, a 1859 edition of joint authorship of A.S. Pushkin and T.H. Shevchenko, is the object of this thesis. It constitutes a modest beginning of what in future might develop into a systematic and comprehensive branch of Pushkiniana.

The background and reasons for this edition are examined in Part One. Part Two deals with Pushkin's personal problems in regard to czarist censorship and the poet's reaction. Part Three discusses an hypothesis concerning the real authorship of two of the poems ascribed to Pushkin.

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PREFACE

In a work of this nature, where the vehicle of expression is the English language and the subject matter is Russian literature, it is almost incumbent that one is bilingual. However, this piece of research has endeavoured to render the material and argument in such a fashion that the layman will also be able to follow the argument. Nevertheless the author is aware of the shortcomings of this work, the limitations placed upon him by the language barrier against which he had to struggle from the very outset. Two things were very helpful in overcoming these difficulties: translation and transliteration.

Where there did not exist any recognized translations, the author has done his own translating. This is the case with the texts of the poems of the Leipzig¹ edition. Moreover, the translations are made from the original throughout. In some instances, however, when this edition was obviously faulty, recent editions² have been consulted. Whenever possible the Leipzig edition was strictly adhered to except in cases where antiquated spelling or changed and new rules of punctuation and grammar made for greater precision and clarity, the

¹This thesis is based on Novye Stikhotvorenia Pushkina i Shavchenki, Leipzig, Wolfgang Gerhard, 1859 - hereafter referred to simply as the "Leipzig edition".

²Recent editions: (a) A.S. Pushkin, Sochinenia v troikh (Works in 3 volumes, State edition) Moscow 1955.

(b) A.S. Pushkin, Polnoe sobranie sochenenii v desiati tomakh (Complete works in 10 volumes), Academy of Sciences USSR, Moscow - Leningrad, 1949.

more recent editions were consulted. Translations of all of Pushkin's poem appearing in this little volume are relegated to the appendix.

A yet more difficult task was to find an accepted form of transliteration that would be plausible and still scientific enough for a thesis of this type. This need was particularly keenly felt in quoting sources other than English. Since most of the source material is extracted from Russian and Ukrainian books, it was imperative that a recognized system of transliteration be adopted. The need for such a simple and yet accredited system of transliteration plagued the author from the very beginning.

There is no universally accepted system of transliterating the letters of the Cyrillic alphabet. Almost every country uses a different system suited to the peculiarities of its own language. Quite well known among slavists are the German, the English, and the French systems - each satisfactory for its respective country. The most accurate and most scientific system is the one accepted by the Permanent Committee of Linguists of UNESCO.

This thesis has chosen yet another system, that employed by the Library of Congress.³ It has many advantages for a work of such a nature. It is, first of all, well known in Canada and the United States. Most standard library cards use this system and, hence, sources can be quoted and found

³ A.L.A. Rules for Author and Title Entries, American Library Association, Chicago, 1949, p.p.243-247.

without difficulty. One shortcoming of this system is that it will never approximate in accuracy the pronunciation of any of the other systems which are based on phonetic accuracy.

But this thesis is not so much concerned with grammar and phonics as with ideas and facts of literary criticism. Expedience dictated the acceptance of the Library of Congress system. The few changes in the spelling of proper names are due to the fact that their "misspelling" has become fixed in English by long and popular usage. For example the English prefer the spelling "czar" instead of "tsar"; "Moscow" instead of "Moskva", etc.

Where Russian titles which employ foreign names are transliterated, the foreign name will appear in its original spelling, French, German or English: not "Shekspir" but "Shakespeare", not "Dantes" but "d'Antes", not "Gertsen" but "Hertzen". The table of transliteration can be found in the appendix.

During the writing of this work the author continuously felt the lack of first hand source material pertaining to his theme. Especially keenly was felt the need of works published in this field during the last decade in the Soviet Union. Such material was nearly impossible to obtain. The ladies in the Reference Library of the University of Manitoba, Misses M. Mackenzie, K. Gillespie and M. Booth, deserve credit for obtaining the necessary works. They went to great length of

trouble to obtain what could be obtained on this continent. The author expresses his hearty thanks to these ladies.

The author here formally wishes to acknowledge his gratitude for the help, direct and indirect, that he received from his teacher and advisor, J.B. Rudnic'kij, who has done the initial research on this 100 year old book.⁴ It is doubtful whether this thesis would ever have been written without the spadework that had been done by a seasoned scholar. This research paper was attempted after much encouragement from him, and much of the credit for it must go to Dr. Rudnic'kij.

⁴J.B. Rudnic'kij, Shevchenkiana in the West, the first edition of Shevchenko in Leipzig, Germany, 1859, Winnipeg, 1959.