



Dead Souls (Norton Critical Editions)

By Nikolai Gogol

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Few literary works have been so variously interpreted as Nikolai Gogol's enduring comic masterpiece, *Dead Souls*.

This Norton Critical Edition reprints the text of the acclaimed George Reavey translation, which has been fully annotated for undergraduate readers.

"Backgrounds" contains not only Gogol's correspondence relevant to the novel but also the four formal letters that set forth his views on the work.

The editor has also included a useful chronology of Gogol's life and an invaluable table of ranks in czarist Russia.

A wide range of criticism includes Robert Maguire's general overview of Gogol's criticism; two nineteenth-century Russian appraisals; Donald Fanger's brilliant essay; and a broad spectrum of twentieth-century Russian critical opinion.

It features, as well, essays by Vladimir Nabokov and Edmund Wilson.

The Russian essays have been translated specially for this Norton Critical Edition.

A Selected Bibliography directs readers to resources for further study.

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Editorial Review

Language Notes

Text: English, Russian (translation)

From the Back Cover

"I want to show all Russia in this novel", wrote Nikolai Gogol to Alexander Pushkin as he began writing Dead Souls in 1835. Published seven years later, Gogol's sardonic, bizarre tale revolves around Pavel Ivanovich Chichikov, a mystifying swindler who travels through provincial Russia trafficking in "souls" - those serfs who, even if dead, could still be bought and sold for profit. Though Gogol never realized his full ambition for Dead Souls - it helped propel him into insanity and he burned the second part of the book - the work endures as one of the most dazzling pieces of fiction ever written.

About the Author

Nikolai Gogol (1809–1852) was a novelist and political satirist. The author of Dead Souls and The Overcoat, he was one of Russia's greatest writers.

George Gibian was Goldwin Smith Professor of Russian and Comparative Literature at Cornell University. His honors include Fulbright, Guggenheim, American Philosophical Society, and Rockefeller Foundation fellowships. He was the author of *The Man in the Black Coat: Russia's Lost Literature of the Absurd*, *The Interval of Freedom: Russian Literature During the Thaw*, and *Tolstoj and Shakespeare*. He was the editor of the Norton Critical Editions of Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* and *War and Peace*, and Gogol's *Dead Souls*, and of the Viking Penguin Portable Nineteenth-Century Russian Reader. Professor Gibian's articles have appeared in the *Wall Street Journal*, *The New Republic*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, and *Newsday*, among others.

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