

Title: The Terrible Glance: Horror in Gogol's Ukrainian Stories
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Abstract:

In Nikolai Gogol's Ukrainian stories, the interaction of two irreconcilable worlds – that of the mundane and the supernatural – create the conditions for horror. The separation between these worlds depends on interiority, which in turn creates the possibility of thresholds and borders. Drawing on Mikhail Bakhtin's perforated and open grotesque body, which excludes the non-communal body and precludes horror, I evaluate the danger posed by the closed-off interior in Gogol's *Evenings on a Farm Near Dikanka* as well as “*Viy*”, analyzing the importance assumed by vision and the gaze as a mediator between irreconcilable worlds. The fateful decision to look – to make contact with a reality one cannot understand – is central to Gogol's supernatural tales, but also offers insight into the poetics of horror and mediation.