

**Title:** Satiety or Freedom: The Unwanted Transfiguration of Sharik in Bulgakov's *Heart of a Dog*

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In his 1968 introduction to Mikhail Bulgakov's satiric novel, *Heart of a Dog*, Michael Glenny writes: "The weird surgeon, a specialist in rejuvenation (for 'rejuvenation' read 'revolution'), is the embodiment of the Communist Party – perhaps of Lenin himself – and the drastic transplant operation that he performs in order to transform the dog into the simulacrum of a human being is the revolution itself." But as Diana Burgin argues, Glenny oversimplifies the novel by viewing it purely as a political parable, first "by emphasizing the allegorical significance of the Professor's experiment at the expense of his highly individualistic personality and creativity," and second because the political message is conveyed explicitly through the confrontation between the Professor and Shvonder. But Burgin seems to complicate matters by calling the Professor "Bulgakov's most autobiographical hero." But it is through the study of Sharik's language that leads us to a more accurate reading of *Heart of a Dog*. This paper will attempt to explain Bulgakov's work as an allegory for the fate of the writer in Soviet society. Sharik, a representation of a writer who can create freely, is transformed into Sharikov in an attempt to control his thought processes by turning him into a Soviet citizen. The focus of most of the extant criticism is placed on Sharikov after his transformation, on the Professor's role in orchestrating the experiment, or on the significance of the experiment itself, leaving Sharik's existence largely ignored. Through a close reading of Sharik's life on the streets prior to being taken in by Preobrazhensky, and through an application of Bulgakov's own biography, we will see that it is, in fact, Sharik who portrays the dilemma of the creative artist under the Soviet regime.

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