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de Haard, E.A.

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SOUND REPETITION IN GRIBOEDOV’S
GORE OT UMA

Eric de Haard

Preliminary remarks
With regard to Gore ot uma, probably most people will not think in the first place of this play in terms of poetry, while Griboedov is considered as a dramatist who wrote his famous play in verse, rather than as a poet in his own right.¹ This is also explained by the limited amount of other verse that Griboedov has left behind, as much of his poetic output has undoubtedly been lost. Since most of the verse that has been saved for posterity concerns Griboedov’s earlier dramatic efforts, the balance naturally shifts to Griboedov as a playwright, though we may safely state that the brilliance of Gore ot uma would outshine any other work in verse.

Certainly, the verse – as verse – of Gore ot uma has not been neglected and has become the subject of a number of excellent detailed studies with respect to metre, rhythm and rhyme.² Throughout the nearly two centuries of its existence many readers have expressed their praise for Griboedov’s artistry as a verse writer, beginning with Puškin, whose well-known rather sour remarks on Griboedov, the play and its characters are fully compensated by his truly prophetic judgement about the verse: О стихах я не говорю: половина – должны войти в пословицу (I’m not speaking about the verses: half of them must become proverbial; 1978, X: 96-97). About a century later, Tynjanov spoke of Gore ot uma as a “сценическая поэма” (scenic poem), of its “поэтическая конкретность” (“poetic concreteness”) and the “лирическая сила Чациго” (“Čackij’s lyrical power”) (1969: 374), emphasizing its poetic qualities.

However, to the best of my knowledge, no special attention has been paid to one particular aspect of the text-as-poetry – the level of sound organization,
other than with respect to the canonical-systematic categories of metre, verse rhythm and rhyme which have been analysed in the works just mentioned. In this paper it is my aim to discuss this aspect of Gore ot uma which, as I hope to demonstrate, plays a considerable role in the dramatic text.

In order to distinguish between different forms of sound organization – which basically rests on sound repetition (further: SR) – I would first like to present a brief typology of SR, which certainly does not lay claim to maximal completeness or precision, but serves to define many of the terms used later in the analysis of Griboedov’s play. It comprises both artistic-aesthetic phenomena and some that seem far removed from this domain. Besides, not in all cases we are dealing with repetition, but with substitution – though the latter is based on (deletion of) repetition.

Conventionally, and formally, the following types can be distinguished: assonance – loosely defined as vowel repetition, in the stricter sense – in consecutive words; alliteration – loosely defined as consonant repetition in consecutive words; in the stricter sense, as repetition of the initial consonants of consecutive words; internal rhyme – defined as rhyme within one verse line, the sound repetition following the laws of end rhyme. Apart from these three canonical types there are other forms of SR, which may have some formal traits in common with these three canonical ones, but, on the whole, are less strictly organized. In Russia, after the studies (and practice) of the Symbolists, a systematic approach to less well-defined SR was initiated, starting with Osip Brik’s article of 1919 ‘Zvukovye povtory’, which deals with repeated consonant clusters in classical Russian poetry.

In recent times, research has resulted in the recognition of a specific type of sound organization as formulated and defined by V.P. Grigor’ev and developed by him, N.A. Koževnikova and others – the phenomenon of паронимическая аттрация (“paronymic attraction”), which, according to Grigor’ev, is especially characteristic of modern Russian twentieth-century poetry where it becomes a dominant organizing factor. In earlier poetry the phenomenon (e.g. in Puškin) is seen as incidental, which applies to Griboedov as well.

Paronymic attraction /paronymy is defined by Grigor’ev as follows: 1) it im-
plies a semantic connection between the (two or more) words/lexemes involved: “возникают различные эффекты семантической близости, или, наоборот, противопоставленности паронимов” (there arise various effects of semantic closeness, or, by contrast, of opposition of the paronyms); 2) the lexemes involved share at least two identical consonants; 3) the lexemes are not connected by derivational proximity, i.e. do not share the (etymologically) same root (Gri- gor’ev 1979: 264). In this third condition Grigor’ev departs from the widespread use of the term парониму (паронимия) in linguistics, where it does refer to different forms derived from the same root. Here it is distinguished from парономасия (паронимия) (cf. Grigor’ev 1979: 257), which is regarded by many as a “mistake”, as “folk” or “false” etymology. Thus the “linguistic” type of paronymy comprises such ancient forms of SR as polyptoton (the occurrence of one root with different cases, figura etymologica (annominatio – the occurrence of one root with different grammatical forms/affixes) and epizeuxis (“pure” word repetition). In order to reduce the danger of terminological confusion it is important to emphasize the following: Grigor’ev recognises that his “паронимическая аттракция” is basically concerned with traditional парономасия, however, he declares that the term паронимия is equally valid for describing the phenomena he investigates, we may surmise, for reasons of simplicity (262-263).

Paronymous attraction, as it is analysed and demonstrated by Grigor’ev, appears to be closely related to the principle of the anagram (diphones and poly-phones), which became the object of research of Ferdinand de Saussure – though the linguist himself was not satisfied with the results (cf. Grigor’ev 1979: 253; Starobinski 1971; Wunderli 2004). Paronymous attraction is also closely related to such well-known phenomena as calembour (pun) and wordplay, but in terms of poetic function these mostly have an either involuntary or intended humorous, or even comical effect. This is dependent on the poetic context, thematics and diction, which are, with few exceptions, fully serious in such poets as Pasternak or Cvetaeva, and, we must presume, in Chlebnikov. More ambiguous in this respect is Majakovskij, whose paranomasias may also be intended at least to raise a smile.

In any case, the expressive, unexpected confrontation of two similar or identi-
The cal lounding words is, in a sense, fraught with the danger of being unintentionally
comical, or worse.

Having arrived halfway this brief typology, we turn to its following, “bottom”
half, which ranges from the humorous to the unethical, not to say, criminal:
The cal lembourg (pun) is halfway between (positive) sound organization and sound
“disorder” (“disorganization”), as it may be either intentionally funny or un-
desirable, unintentional, and, from the viewpoint of maximum efficiency regarded
as an “assembly error”, impairing efficient communication.

Structurally speaking, from here onwards, both the “correct” and the “in-
correct” members of the paronymic couple may be jointly present in the utter-
ance (explicit doubles, or what may be called “sound parallelism”), but more
often the “correct” form is deleted and replaced by the “incorrect” form in the
utterance. Here either the speaker or the listener (or both) may be unaware of
the “mistake”, whereas a third (observer, witness) may notice it. In the latter
case the cal lembourg (pun) can be classified as a malapropism or false etymology,
whereas Spoonerisms may be both intended and involuntary. Unambiguously
negative are slips of the tongue and typo’s (which can be regarded as Fehlleistung in
a Freudian framework).

Certainly intentional, however on behalf of the intended receiver of the mes-
sage, is a recent unethical, or even criminal development: typosquatting – the use
of domain names on the internet that are very similar to “real” sites (e.g. “goofle”,
or “yahoi”). These speculate on users’ typing errors to direct them to a site with
all kinds of dubious purposes. Admittedly, such a phenomenon is determined
by pragmatic function, rather than form, but it serves to illustrate the potential
dangers of paronymy. Thus, the members of this brief typology form a continuum,
sometimes it is difficult to draw a sharp distinction, when regarded out of con-
text, as the aesthetical borders on the pathological (and even the criminal).

However, at this point we may recall the warning issued by Willem Weststeijn
in his article “Poets are not Aphasics” (Weststeijn 1983). Here, as his title shows,
he strongly objects to a pathological view of literary construction – in this case
with regard to metaphor and metonymy which, from a point of view of “norma-

licity”, are by some regarded as speech deficiencies. By the same token, almost all
SR listed in this typology can in some way function fruitfully in the construction of artistic texts. This is connected with the above-mentioned basic tenet of all theories of SR phenomena which can be called structural, that repetition on the sound level results in attention being drawn to various possible semantic relationships—in its ultimate form a (quasi-)onomatopoeic view, establishing, suggesting or “recovering” the motivatedness of the poetic sign(ifier). This is basically a matter of artistic parole, but for a poet like Chlebnikov the full motivatedness of any linguistic sign governs all of the langue.

In a discussion of sound repetitions it should be recognised that their (artistic) effectiveness is dependent on a number of factors that, taken together, determine what may be called their (relative) “strength” or “weakness”. Of great relevance are the following factors:

1) The number of identical sounds in the units (words) involved in the repetition: cf. Grigor’ev’s criteria for “paronymous attraction”, defined by a minimum of two consonants, whereas three or more strengthen the SR; in Grigor’ev’s terms, the “glubina” (“depth”) of the paronymous relation (1979: 266, 275n.).

2) The distance between the paronyms. Grigor’ev distinguishes between “kontaktnye” (contact) and “distantnye” (distant) “povtory”; cf. also e.g. Koževnikova (1988: 183-184). Obviously, close proximity is the strongest, whereas a critical distance may exist (also depending on other, contextual factors) where the repetition is hardly perceived, or not at all.

3) The type of units involved in the repetition. It makes a difference if whole words are repeated (as in epizeuxis, or in epanalepsis), or roots, or grammatical forms (affixes).

Word, root or morpheme repetition has sound repetition as a corollary. And though the repetition of whole words may seem trivial and “unoriginal”, it is a factor that works, though at a different level, and its lack of “inventiveness” does not diminish its great poetic-artistic potential. Whereas the structural significance of lexical (root-)repetition has traditionally been acknowledged in rhetorical devices (flexion, as in polyptoton, and derivation, as in figura etymologica), it does not appear as the most “original” SR.

However, morpheme (affix) repetition seems problematical with respect to
its participation in SR. Even though grammatical end rhyme has always been accepted as valid in Russian poetry (to my knowledge, in classical Russian poetry it has never seriously been considered as a too easy way of making a rhyme), at first sight it seems trivial that grammatical repetition (e.g. concordance) entails sound repetition. The occurrence of repeated /im/ in e.g. этим своим новым знакомым does not strike one as a particularly salient SR. Nevertheless, if combined (at short range) with other (e.g. lexical) repetitions of /im/, they could surely play a supporting role, joining in with an already effective paronymous pair or series.

Making mention of accidental or intentional typo’s we have entered the field of graphic representation. This leads us to a second general point to be considered – as in all discussions concerning various kinds of sound organization – viz. the status (hypostasis) of what is repeated: Are we dealing with phonic or with graphic substance? On which plane do we consider repetition (e.g. on which plane does it work)? Are we dealing with “sounds” or “letters” and from which perspective? On this issue most structuralists recognise the primacy of phonic substance. It is noteworthy that de Saussure considered calling his “anagrammes” “anaphonies”, as he wished to maintain the priority of the phonological principle (Starobinski 1971: 27).

But in this case, are we to adopt a phonetic or a phonemic/phonological approach? In both cases there are different schools and opinions. Without going any deeper into this matter, let us note, however, that a phonic approach may consider either phonetic/perceptual, or phonemic/phonological units as a basis of analysis. In the latter case we must further take into account that there are different phonological approaches and schools, some examples of which are noted in the following.

Against this general tendency, Grigor’ev, in his treatment of paronymous attraction, shows himself to be a champion of the (ortho)graphic principle (1979: 264), following Brik’s 1919 study where he states that e.g. hard and soft consonants are not distinguished (Brik also speaks of “bukvennye povtory”, “letter repetitions”), and relying on statements from Russian poets that what they have in mind is first of all graphic form (265). An objection to Grigor’ev’s
statement is that this leads to a certain inconsistency: if we assume that “laws”
for SR follow those of Russian end rhyme, this does not apply to Russian (non-
eye) end rhyme (Grigor’ev is aware of this [265]), which often shows a perfect
phonetic identity (e.g. an accepted rhyme like λέγ/ρόκ) or phonological identity
(e.g. λίπ/βής), while differing graphically. Thus Grigor’ev’s thesis ignores
some phonologically/phonemically relevant phenomena which are not graphi-
cally reflected in Russian such as, to name a few: 1) word-final devoicing,
2) vowel reduction and 3) palatalization, reflected in a “misleading” way: as
hard/soft indicated by a following vowel (or soft sign), rather than the con-
sonant grapheme itself.

Nevertheless, confronting these contrary views with each other, we must
take into account that listening/watching a play like Gore ot uma on stage is a
different activity from silent reading. The dramatic text is essentially synaes-
thetic in the sense of having an auditory (plus visual) hypostasis (characters’
text) and a graphic hypostasis (including paratext). Both hypostases can interact
and complement each other, especially if the reader is familiar with both.
Generally speaking, this also holds for any reading/declamation of poetry.
Without going into all aspects of the matter, and recognising the fundamental
primacy of the phonic substance for Russian poetry (if only on the grounds of
the laws of classical end rhyme) I would defend the view that both hypostases
of the poetic/dramatic text should be taken into account in dealing with what I
would still call “sound repetition”. In a situation of a (silent) reading of a poem,
the reader may perceive graphic repetition as sound repetition, especially in the
case of Russian, where there is a relatively high concordance between grapheme
and phoneme (when e.g. compared with English with its abundance of homo-
graphs and homophones). Yet, when reading poetry, both the graphic and the
phonic principle can be “active” in different degrees, as the reader makes a
(how ever minimal) mental representation of the text’s potential phonic con-
cretization. This also depends on context and reading/hearing experience. For
example, those who have heard Brodsky read his own poems, are quite likely to
recall and co-re-enact this declamation when re-reading these poems and pos-
sibly many others by the same poet. Of course this also holds for any impressive
declamation, say, of Puškin by a good čtec on a literaturnyj večer. Besides, in recent years the availability of “resounding” poetry has also increased by means of new media and data-carriers.

Admittedly, it is doubtful whether this works the other way around to the same extent. Usually a graphic representation does not arise in our minds when listening to a poetry reading, except perhaps when we know a poem’s special graphic form, such as e.g. Apollinaire’s ‘Il pleut’, or e.e. cummings’ lower-case poetry, or Majakovskij’s lesenki.

This leads to the recognition that, in a reading process, phonological oppositions may be (temporarily) ignored, in favour of recognising the significance of graphically identical units, and that, in accordance with specific circumstances, “letters” may be on a par with “sounds”.

One final preliminary remark on the phonic/graphic issue: If we recognise the validity of graphic alongside phonic form, it remains a matter of contention (but of great importance for assessing the strength of sound repetitions in Russian), in how far unstressed vowels take part in SR. Obviously, unstressed a and o “suffer” from their qualitative change in reduction, whereas unstressed e, i, (merging in [ι]) retain more similarity to their stressed counterparts (this does not hold for unstressed ja (ʃ)). Even more so unstressed u does not lose much of its quality, in comparison to its stressed counterpart.

Returning to the semantic aspects of SR adumbrated above, let us very briefly consider the possible functions or effects of sound repetition on the semantic level: in all formalist and structuralist views SR are regarded as emphasizing, establishing, or suggesting a special semantic relation between the units involved in the sound repetition, often formulated as a matter of “sense” (смысл) rather than “meaning” (значение).8 This applies to all more or less systematic repetitions, but with increasing significance (strength) from alliteration, via assonance and paronymy, to full rhyme. Generally speaking, categories of semantic relationship are based on metaphor or metonymy, but also other, more specific relations between units are possible, e.g. oxymoron, or synaesthesia. Metaphor basically entails two opposed possibilities (“sound metaphor”):
a) a suggestion of synonymy, of identity in meaning, equation; b) an emphasis on opposition (e.g. день – тень, already existing at the level of the langue). Metonymic relations may be of various kinds, e.g. an unexpected causal, or spatial relation may be intimated between the units involved. Actually, the coexistence of both a metaphorical and a metonymical suggested linkage is quite possible (e.g. грёзы – розы, where dreams may be like roses (sweet, abundant) or be evoked by roses). Obviously, semantic relations arising from sound organization are inexhaustible as poets again and again appear to explore and exploit its possibilities.

**Gore ot uma**

Taking into account the preceding preliminary considerations, here we list a number of various sound repetitions in Gore ot uma. This inventory cannot be exhaustive within the limitations of this paper, but nevertheless attempts to demonstrate the rich and effective use of various SR by Griboedov. First, let us note some examples of the traditionally recognized SR:

Griboedov widely uses assonance (in which he generally shows a predilection for o-o, a-a – also in his earlier dramatic writings). Sometimes the assonance is triple or even quadruple, as in: Виши, прихоти какие завелись! (1-1, 56, Ф); Грех не беда, молва не хороша (1-5, 63, Л); Хотел объехать целий свет (1-10, 73, Ч). Cf. also the morphological, but very effective assonance: Акем из них я дорогу, / Хочу – люблю, хочу – скажу (2-11, 94, С).

Alliteration (in the strict sense of initial letters/sounds of consecutive words) is less frequent, but with Не сипи, пожалуйста не скатывайся со стула (1-1, 54, Л) Griboedov shows straightaway that he likes sound effects, the alliteration proper being reinforced by the repetition of к and т, which in fact amounts to a case of paronymous attraction. In Играем и шумим по стульям и столам (1-7, 68, Ч) a metonymical relationship is put into relief. We may also note Скажи скорее (2-8, 89, Ч), which comes close to alliterations in the already given form of colloquial idioms and sayings, which in many languages favour alliteration, such as вкривь и вкось (2-3, 81, Ф; 3-1, 102, С). Combinations of vowel and consonant repetition, of assonance and alliteration in the less strict sense, occur...
regularly. A striking example, combining both vowel and consonant repetition, is the hero’s name, which figures not only in the list of dramatis personae, but is spoken several times by other characters: Александр Андреич Чанский – a case of (linguistic) paronymy between first name and patronymic (etymologically from the same root: Gr. andr-) – whereas Griboedov establishes an assonance with the hero’s surname. Cf. also Серге́й Серге́евич, an anonymatio of father and son which, after Griboedov, will have a long tradition in Russian literature. A more subtle interplay of assonance and consonant repetition: Удевушки сон утренний так тонок (1-1, 57, Л). Here we find an instance of the relatively weak vowel reduction of y: only one of the y’s is stressed, yet the assonance is perceptible. Cf. also Вчера был бал, а завтра будет два (1-7, 68, Ч), and a complex sequence like У покровителей зевать на потолок / Явиться помочь, попакапать, пообедать, / Подставить стул, поднять платок (2-2, 78, Ф) and the well-known lines: Тебя уж упекут, / Под суд, как пить дают (2-3, 80, Ф) with под суд repeated in the following lines, and the internal rhyme added to the identical end rhyme. These last two examples show a great extent rely on grammatical repetition, which does not, however, diminish their impact. Occasionally we find “pure” internal rhyme: Богат, и на богатой был женат (2-1, 75, Ф), which is reinforced by additional “linguistic” paronymy, in this case a polyptoton. Additional cases of “linguistic” paronymy: Попал или хотел попасть? (1-4, 61, Ф) and К любимцам, к гвардин, к гвардейским, к гвардионцам (2-6, 88, Ск). A related figure is the figura etymologica (which is not especially inventive, but belongs to the idiom of the language): будешь горе горевать (4-14, 153, Ф).

In a number of cases the SR satisfies the conditions of paronomasia (paronymy, as defined by Grigor’ev), and we may venture to speak of “paronymous attraction” (however, we repeat the proviso made above concerning its exclusive occurrence in Russian modern poetry): Right at the beginning of Gore ot uma we find [...] беда. / Зашла беседа ваша за ночь (1-1, 54, Л), and a little later Счастливые часов не наблюдают (1-3, 58, С), followed by И свет и грусть. Как быстро ночи (1-3, 58, С). Famusov’s tirade against fashion and literature receives additional expressiveness by the concluding [...] И книжных и би-
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Especially inventive is: Мне нравится, при этом смею / Искусно как коснулись вы / Предубеждения Москвы (2-6, 88, Ск), which in fact forms an almost complete anagram. Other examples: Вискки ей уксусом потри / Опрыскивай вонюю (2-8, 90, Ч) and Скажите лучше, почему / Вы с барышней скромны, а с горнишней [sic] повесы? (2-12, 96, Л). Here we may even assume that Griboedov changed the spelling (in accordance with old alternative pronunciation) from ч to ш in order to enhance the depth of the paronomasia. Not quite meeting the standards but certainly remarkable is Повыкинь вздор из головы (1-4, 63, Ф).

To a certain extent some of the preceding examples can be regarded as wordplay. Again we must emphasize that the poet Griboedov is responsible here, rather than the characters, though perhaps Famusov and Čackij may be interpreted as consciously producing such effects. In the following I will discuss the specific wordplay – and SR in the wider sense – on the components of the title “Горе от ума” and their occurrence in the text. It can be seen as a “thematic” title, in the sense that it captures the global content and moral of the play, expressing a paratextual authorial comment (cf. Clayton 1987: 9). These are put forward as the pivotal words of the text that follows, though they need not necessarily occur in the characters’ speech – which, actually, is the case.

The wordplay on the most intriguing and problematical component, ум, has become the subject of J. Douglas Clayton’s excellent study of its semantics (1987). However, I would like to add to his findings, which remain within the (semantic) domain of the inherent ambiguity (polysemy) of ум and the play with this root in compounds and cognates based on “linguistic” paronymy. In the following I will go beyond this and examine those specific sound repetitions in which горе and ум are involved, that belong to the field of “paronomasia”, i.e. with units that are not cognates or compounds.

Горе

Actually, горе is not very frequent in the text (its derivative, the “linguistic” paronym горький also appears only once), though towards the end it occurs a few times in Čackij’s speech and acquires more significance, as the hero increasingly...
becomes aware of his situation. Ironically, it also occurs in Famusov’s speech, when he tells Čackij that if he moves to a provincial town he will горе горевать (4-14, 153, Φ; the figura etymologica already mentioned above), whereas for Čackij Moscow is the town (город) that means горе for him.

This brings us to the paronomastic wordplay on the string гор (горь), entailing some potential paronyms: гора, город, гореть (горячий), гордый. The case for intentional wordplay on these different roots in Gore ot uma seems rather weak, but two factors seem to strengthen it:

1) the remarkable coincidence of two characters’ names: Загорецкий and Горичевы (Горичи in other variants of the play). What matters is that these occur in characters’ speech, not just in the stage directions or list of dramatis personae, though reading these names (in graphic form) increases their presence. Semantically the names are indeterminate, but if we would be made to choose a meaning, we might think of за горой (over the hill, mountain) in Загорецкий (cf. Загорский), in the case of Горич in Горичевы (burn). In any case, it seems that the paronymic attraction of горе was so strong, that these names are motivated rather than fully arbitrarily chosen.10

2) There are some interesting combinations, in relatively close proximity, of the roots гор and горь with ум, that allude to their (causal) linkage in the title: В нем Загорецкий не умрет (3-13, 121, Ч); [Загорецкий:] В горах изранен, в лоб, сошел с ума от раны (3-18, 125, З); Ах! голова горит, вся кровь моя в волненьи. / Явилась! нет ее! неужели в виденьи? / Не впрямь ли я сошел с ума? (4-10, 146, Ч). Here the effect is reinforced by the alliteration in the first line and the continuation a few lines later in which the “real” горе appears: [...] Уж коли горе пить / Так лучше сразу (ibid.). In these last two passages, it seems, there is a pun on the title as a whole, including a suggestion of the causal relation, via в горах (in the mountains) and горит (is burning), respectively.

Ум
However, most striking are sound repetitions containing the central root (and word) ум. It differs from гор in that it cannot enter into a paronymous relation, according to Grigor’ev’s criteria, lacking a second consonant. Nevertheless the
wordplay on it and other ("weaker") forms of sound repetition are a prominent feature of *Gore ot uma*.

But first, let us briefly consider the semantics of *ум* and its compounds and derivatives, which has defied the efforts of translators into all languages, but, and this may serve as some consolation, is far from unambiguous for Russians. It is sufficiently complicated to require a special study of its use and meanings (including *умный*) in *NOSRJA* (1997: 447-456).

However, there is also the diachronic factor: One has to take into account that *ум* in eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century usage may have had some different meanings, or connotations, for Griboedov’s contemporaries (cf. Il’ev 1994). Clayton, apart from the general meaning of *ум*, discusses its concrete meaning(s) in the play, which, for different characters, amounts to something different (especially Faminov vs. Čackij), which yields, according to Clayton, three meanings of *ум* (1987: 8). Closely connected to this, and further increasing its intricacies, are the derivatives such as *умный* and a range of set expressions, the most important of which are *не в своем уме*, *сойти с ума*/*сумасшедший*, and *ум* which result in wordplay. This actually leads to the misunderstanding (Sofija’s *Он не в своем уме*; 3-14, 121, С) and the following exaggeration and spread of rumour (*Он сошел с ума*), which proves to be central – and fatal – in the development of the plot (cf. Clayton 1987: 10).

However, Griboedov’s paronymic play with *ум* on the lexical-semantic level (word/root repetition implying sound repetition) is enhanced by play on the level of sound organization – more elaborate than in the case of *горе* – by means of various forms of sound repetition: internal rhyme, anagram and paronomasia. A few of these have been pointed out by Clayton – in his words: “‘folk etymolog[ies]’ on Griboedov’s part”: *умудрились*, *мудрено*, *премудрого*, *суматоха* (1987: 7).

*Ум* occurs in various combinations with other words, containing this sound sequence *ум* but also its reverse *мум*. Here we list some of these (partial) anagrams and internal rhymes (some occur as end rhymes in the text) with some notes on the resulting semantic relationships:

a) *ум* ~ *мум* (almost a “false etymology” on a metonymical basis – contiguity) ~ *чум* (basically a semantic contrast, cf. Repetilov’s repetition in 4-4, 138) ~ *чума*
(turning out to be a “synonym”, or a “result” of um); ~ умереть and ~ уморил (“results” of um).

b) anagram/reverse: um ~ (с)мутить ~ музы ~ музыка ~ мудрый ~ умудрились ~ амур ~ мундир ~ муж (замужем) ~ мазурки ~ жмурки ~ ему мир ~ румянец ~ кутерьму ~ тюрему ~ тьму. Some of these may not seem very significant and do not quite engage in direct contact with um. However, we may add one salient case, the name Фамусов (on its possible meaning and derivation cf. Tynjanov 1969: 373), which contains um in reverse, but more importantly, the anagram с ума, in fact a palindrome. This is strengthened by the fact that his name is spoken in the text, though quite late (twice, in 4-1 and 4-2) and thus is not merely a matter of a reading of Gore ot um.

The relative strength of these SR is proportionate to their proximity in the text. Thus contact (“kontaktynye”) SR are more effective than distant repetitions, especially if they occur in clusters. In Gore ot um there are a number of such clusters which I list in the following: For reasons of space, despite their proximity the fragments containing these clusters are not all quoted in full, but their distance is indicated. Other SR occurring in the vicinity of these clusters are also noted, as they reinforce the basic SR.

A strong cluster occurs quite early: Мать умерла: умел я принять/ В мадам Розье вторую мать / ... / Вмна была ... (range 4 lines; I-4, 60, Ф); Подумаемь, как счастье своечарно! / ... / Когда ж печальное ничего на ум нейдет, / Забылись музыкой ... (range 4 lines; I-5, 64, С); ... Что стали умны хоть куда. / Пускай в Молчалине ум бойкий, гений смелый, / Но есть ли в нем та страсть? то чувство? пылкость? / Чтоб, кроме вас, ему мир целый / Казался прах и суета? (range 4 lines; 3-1, 99, Ч); Не засижусь, войду, всего минуты две, / Потом, подумайте, член Английского клуба, / Я там дни целые пожертвую молве / Про ум Молчалина, про душу Скалозуба (3-2, 103, Ч). These last four lines may seem rather weak (in passing we note what is almost a pun, the (semantically) antithetical молва ~ Молчалин), however, across the boundary between scene 2 and 3 there is a strong continuation, as Čackij orates: Ах! Софья! Неужли Молчалин избран ей! / А чем не муж? Ума в нем только мало; / Но чтоб иметь детей, / Кому ума недоставало?
Beginning with 3-14 the rumour of Čackij’s “madness” spreads, which entails the regular and insistent (paronymic) repetition of с ума, сумасшествие, полоумный, безумный, which also dominates the SR in the second half of the play: А музу моему совет дать жить в деревне / Б езумный по всему. | Я видела из глаз/ | По матери пошел, по Анне Алексеевне / Покойница с ума сходила восемь раз. | На свете дивные бывают приключения! | В его лета с ума спрыгнул! ... (3-21, 127-128, НД/3/Гв/Ф/Х). Cf. also the famous Ученье – вот чума, ученыость – вот причина, / Что нынче, пуще, чем когда. Безумных разволось людей, и дел и мнений / И впрямь с ума сойдешь ... (3-21, 128, Ф/Х).

However, it appears Griboedov saved the best for last, as Čackij’s final tirade contains a number of clusters: Подумайте / Муж-мальчик, муж-слуга, из женинных пажей – / Высокий идеал московских всех мужей (4-14, 155, Ч) and 16 lines later: М учителей толпа, / Нескладных умников, лукавых простяков, / Старух зловещих, стариков, / Дряхлеющих над выдумками, вздором, – / Безумных вы меня прославили всем хором.

And his famous final words: Где оскорбленному есть чувство уголок! – / Карету мне, карету! (4-14, 156, Ч). The series is rounded off by Famusov, who has the final word in the play: Ну что? не видишь ты, что он с ума сошел? / Скажи серьезно: Безумный! что он тут за чепуху молол! Низкопоклонник! тести! и про Москву так грозно! / А ты меня решилась умрить? ... (4-15, 156, Ф).

Thus Griboedov reinforces his brilliant (paronymic) wordplay with some
highly significant (paronomastic) sound effects. A final point to be considered is the distribution of these sound patterns among the characters. Though Čackij’s, Famusov’s and Liza’s speech styles have been appreciated for their juicy expressiveness, it turns out that none of them are really “privileged” in this respect. We might especially note that one of the less “expressive” characters, Skalozub, produces a paronomasia like the one mentioned above: Икисусно как коснулись вы (2-6, 88, Ск). SR occur in the speech of all characters, and in this respect the poet Griboedov makes himself felt. Like metre/rhythm and rhyme, his use of these SR testifies to the double articulation of dramatist and dramatis personae, which is obscured by the accepted convention of “ordinary people” speaking in verse, both in reading and in hearing/watching Goz ot uma.

It would be something of an exaggeration to regard Griboedov as a direct forerunner of poets like Bal’mont, Cvetaeva, Pasternak, and Chlebnikov. The latter took sound (repetition) to its farthest consequences, welding sound/letter and meaning together in an attempt to accomplish the full motivatedness of the word. Nevertheless this incomplete inventory of various types of SR in Griboedov’s comedy shows that he did not just exploit some additional expressiveness of sound organization, but by means of sound- and wordplay also uncovered so far hidden semantic linkages. By their frequency and occurrence at crucial moments, they appear to contribute to the fact that half of the verse lines have indeed become unforgettable, as predicted by Puškin.

Notes
1 Cf. E.V. Chvorost’janova, ‘Lirika Andreja Bitova’, Russian Literature, LXI (2007), p. 425, who, though in a quite different context, chooses Griboedov as an example of an author whose one field of literary output is given priority over another in literary reference works.
2 Cf. e.g. Tomashaevskij (1946), and more recently Šapir (2000), who pays special attention to the distribution of particular metrical-rhythmic features among the main characters and provides statistical analyses. For a brief but comprehensive analysis of the play see Kośny (1988).
3 Scherr uses the terms “sound repetitions” (1986: 267), “sound correspondences” (267), and “sound texture” (268). Wachtel uses the terms “sound organization” (2004: 42), “sound patterning” (43), “sound texture” (43). These largely correspond to “эвфония” (euphony) and “инструментовка” (instrumentation). The latter two and the more general “sound organization”, “sound texture” would also encompass such “large-scale” phenomena as the lipogram and lipogrammatic selection (avoidance), or, in contrast, “positive” selection out of predilection for particular phonemes or phonological features (as in the poetics of the Batjuškov–Žukovskij early Romantic school; cf. Scherr 1986: 270).
Of course, the existence of such semantic connections has been claimed in most structuralist and semiotic theories with regard to the most canonical form of SR, end rhyme.

Here I just touch upon the problem of intentionality, without attempting to solve it. Cf. Scherr "[...], instances of sound correspondence [...] may well be due as much to intuitive processes as to a conscious effort" (1986: 269). To what degree are SR (whether poetic or quotidian) involuntary, subconscious, or simply accidental? One might catch oneself writing автóр прав which equally accidentally can be translated as "the writer is right", just like we can catch ourselves speaking in rhymes.

In no way I intend to suggest that root repetition is inherently trivial, "unoriginal" or artistically inferior. One need only think of Chlebnikov’s ‘Заклённе смехом’ as an example of the contrary, actually one huge combination of polyptoton and figura etymologica.

Opinions on /i/ diverge, they are seen by some as phonologically different vowels, Cf. e.g. Tomaševskij, who, no doubt on the ground of perceptual difference, stated that Russian has six vowels: a, e, o, u, i, and y (1925: 55). Against this stands the view in favour of regarding [y] and [i] as realizations of one phoneme /i/, on the grounds of their complementary distribution (after soft and hard consonants respectively), whereas the very fact that the rhyme has always been accepted as valid in Russian classical poetry is adduced as proof of this phonemic identity of [i] and [y].

This whole field of paronomasia was to be explored later by Marina Cvetaeva, in her ‘Позма ропа’, though with the exception of гореть or горячий, which she appears to have avoided.

In the context of sound repetition, it remains remarkable that what we may call “alliterative attraction” has influenced the traditional English translation “Woe from Wit” and even more so the less frequent “Wit Works Woe”.

It is a matter of debate whether grammatical -y and -му (masc./neut. dative of pron./adj., masc. root ending in -м plus dative -у, stressed or unstressed) have some validity as members of sound repetition. This repetition seems trivial, however, again it must be noted that grammatical rhyme is also accepted. Here we repeat our observation that unstressed [u] also participates in SR (cf. also Wachtel 2004: 44). The sequence written нwv is also taken into account in some cases. Some words containing both y and м are also included, e.g. минута.

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