

GOGOL AS THE ENLIGHTENER



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Abstract:

The great Russian writer Nikolai Vasilievich Gogol, whose 200th anniversary we are celebrating this year, was one of the greatest spiritual writers in Russia. Only a few contemporaries were able to intuitively understand the vocation of Gogol as the greatest enlightener of the Fatherland. What task did this wonderful artist of words set for us? What order did you leave? N.V. Gogol was no stranger to teaching. In 1833 he began teaching history at the Patriotic Institute of St. Petersburg, where the daughters of the military were trained. His fascination with the history of Gogol appears in him from the realization of its enormous educational value.

The publisher Pletnev, who put him in this position, “believed Gogol that he was a teacher by vocation, and those to whom Pletnev told about his passion for teaching believed this, and finally Gogol himself. He even began to think if teaching and history was not his first occupation, and everything else - the second”¹. Through the efforts of A.S. Pushkin, the writer was admitted to the department of St. Petersburg University, where he began to teach a course on the history of the Middle Ages². Nikolai Vasilievich soon had the idea to teach history at the Kiev University, opened in 1833. St. Vladimir, where his friend Maksimovich had already taught. “There, there! to Kiev! to ancient, beautiful Kiev! ... I admire in advance when I imagine how my works will boil in Kiev,” he convinces Pushkin. Friends actively fought for a new place, but the trustee of the Kiev educational district Bradke did not agree to Gogol's candidacy. Thus ended the writer's pedagogical activity, to which he never returned.

From this period, there is a note "On the Teaching of General History" (1832-1833), where Gogol proposed the content and methods of teaching the history course. On 13 pages, he painted in large strokes the entire history of mankind. “Everything that appears in history: peoples, events - must certainly be alive and, as it were, be before the eyes of listeners or readers, so that every people, every state preserves its peace, its colors, so that the people, with all their exploits and influence on the world, sweep brightly, in exactly the same form and costume in which he was in the past”³. Gogol described the teaching methods as follows: “The professor's syllable should be fascinating, fiery. He must capture the attention of the listeners to the highest degree. If at least one of them can indulge in extraneous thoughts during the lecture, then all the blame falls on the professor: he did not know how to be so entertaining as to subdue even the thoughts of the audience to his will. It is impossible to imagine, without experiencing, what a harmful influence comes from the fact that the professor's syllable is sluggish, dry and does not have that liveliness that does not allow thoughts to crumble for a minute. Then his very learning will not save him: they will not listen to him; then no truths will influence the listeners, because their age is the age of enthusiasm and strong shocks; then what happens is that the most false thoughts, heard by them on the side, but expressed in a brilliant and attractive language, will instantly carry them away and give them a completely false direction. Then even fair remarks arouse inner laughter and the desire to act and reason in defiance; then the most sacred words in his mouth, such as: devotion to Religion and attachment to the Fatherland and the sovereign, turn for them into insignificant opinions. What terrible consequences of this are,

we see, unfortunately, quite often. " It is important here to think about how teaching history influences the state of mind and even political convictions of the audience. Therefore, the professor is responsible not only for the cultivation of future scientists, but most importantly - for the convictions of future citizens. Gogol insists on the accessibility of the readable. "He (professor - LB) should not be content with the fact that some understand him; everyone should understand it. To make it more accessible, he should not be stingy with comparisons. How often comprehensible things are further illustrated by comparison! And therefore he should always take these comparisons from the subjects most familiar to the listeners. Then both the ideal and the abstract become comprehensible. He should not say too much, because this tires the attention of the listeners and because the complexity and abundance of objects will not make it possible to keep everything in mind. Each lecture of a professor must certainly be whole and seem finished, so that in the minds of the audience it appears as a harmonious poem; so that they can see in the beginning what it should contain and what it concludes: through this, in their story they themselves will always observe the goal and integrity. And this is the most necessary thing in history, where not a single event is abandoned without a purpose "

N. V. Gogol sets out the curriculum, which is desirable to follow in teaching the history course. It is based on a subject-chronological principle: first, the whole history of mankind is looked around, then the history of individual civilizations: "... I must embrace it (the people, the state. in power and splendor, when and why it fell (if only it fell) and how it reached the form in which it is now; if the people were wiped off the face of the earth, then how was a new one formed in its place and what it took from the former, and at the end - the history of separate centuries in order to present "the great staircase of centuries. This staircase of centuries is the best means of affirming the modernity of events, persons and phenomena in the memory of listeners. " The writer defines the educational significance of history in the following way: "... my goal is to form the hearts of young listeners with that solid experience that history unfolds, understood in its true greatness; to make them firm, courageous in their rules, so that no frivolous fanatic and no momentary excitement could shake them; to make them meek, obedient, noble, necessary and necessary companions of the Great Sovereign, so that neither in happiness nor in misfortune they would betray their duty, their Faith, their noble honor and their oath - to be faithful to the Fatherland and the Sovereign. " This essay shows how seriously Gogol took the teacher's mission, what high tasks he set before him. Perhaps it was precisely this seriousness and the height of the tasks that did not allow him to engage in teaching with full dedication, which he considered himself not quite worthy. In a small note "Thoughts on Geography" N. V. Gogol expresses a remark about the teacher's responsibility for teaching any children, regardless of their abilities. This idea was later developed by V. V. Zenkovsky, in his discussion of "average, inconspicuous children" (the problem of "amorphous characters" in the work "The principle of individuality in psychology and pedagogy", 1911).

We can agree with the author that the main thing in the great Russian literature, and, of course, in the work of Gogol, is the problem of the ontological freedom of the individual, "independent of the cruelties of the century," and moral and ethical preaching. This is her contribution to world civilization. Another thing is that this sermon can be carried out by different means. Nikolai Vasilievich tried all the means available to him. Whether it succeeded or not is another matter.

References:

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