

Artistic Originality of the Historical Story "Taras Bulba" in the Collection "Mirgorod"

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Annotation: The article examines one of the important and complex issues in the work of N.V. Gogol - his understanding of history and historical personality, as well as their artistic embodiment in the collection "Mirgorod".

Keywords: Historical views of the writer, Gogol's narrative, historical songs, the collection "Mirgorod", the story "Taras Bulba", the style of the story, song sound.

N.V. Gogol's work on "Taras Bulba" was preceded by a thorough, in-depth study of historical sources. Among them should be called "Description of Ukraine" by Boplan, "The Story of the Cossacks of Zaporozhye" by Myshetsky, handwritten lists of Ukrainian chronicles - Samovidets, Velichko, Grabyanka, etc.

But these sources did not satisfy N. Gogol's interest. He lacked a lot in them: first of all, characteristic household details, living signs of the time, a true understanding of a bygone era. Special historical studies and chronicles seemed to the writer too dry, sluggish and, in fact, little helping the artist to comprehend the spirit of folk life, characters, and psychology of people.

Among the sources that helped Gogol in his work on "Taras Bulba" was another, the most important: folk Ukrainian songs, especially historical songs and dumas.

Gogol considered the Ukrainian folk song a precious treasure trove for a historian and poet who wanted to "extract the spirit of the past century" and comprehend the "history of the people". From chronicle and scientific sources, Gogol drew historical information, the factual details he needed concerning specific events. Thoughts and songs gave him something much more substantial. They helped the writer to understand the soul of the people, its national character, the living signs of its way of life. He extracts plot motifs from folklore songs, sometimes even whole episodes. Gogol takes a lot from folk poetry, but he takes it as a writer, sensitive and receptive to its artistic structure, with his attitude to reality, to material. The poetics of the folk song had a huge impact on the entire artistic and visual system of "Taras Bulba", on the language of the story.

A vivid pictorial epithet, a colorful comparison, a characteristic rhythmic repetition — all these techniques enhanced the song sound of the story style. "Am I not worthy of eternal complaints? Isn't the mother who gave birth to me unhappy? Is it not a bitter share that fell on a part of me? Are you not my cruel executioner, my ferocious fate?" (). The unusually emotional, lyrical coloring of the phrase, as well as all its other artistic signs, creates a feeling of organic closeness of the mane of Gogol's narration to the style of folk song.

In the story, the influence of the epic-song technique of common comparisons is felt. The comparison becomes so extensive that it grows as if into an independent picture, which in fact is not at all self-sufficient, but helps to reveal the character of a person or his state of mind more concretely, more fully, more deeply.

"Taras Bulba" has a long and complex creative history. It was first published in 1835 in the collection "Mirgorod". In 1842, in the second volume of his "Works" Gogol placed "Taras Bulba" in a new, radically revised edition. Work on this work continued intermittently for nine years. From 1833 to 1842. Between the first and second editions of Taras Bulba, a number of intermediate editions of some chapters were written.

Gogol's interest in Ukrainian history after 1835 did not weaken at all, and sometimes even acquired a special sharpness, as it was, for example, in 1839. "Little Russian songs are with me," he tells Pogodin in the middle of August this year from Marienbad.

Gogol's interest in history and folklore, which intensified in the autumn of 1839, was connected with the drama from Ukrainian history "Shaved Mustache" conceived by him, as well as with work on the second edition of "Taras Bulba". I had to turn again to the draft drafts of the new edition written at different times, rethink a lot of things, eliminate some accidentally crept in contradictions, etc. Intensive work continued for

three years: from the autumn of 1839 to the summer of 1842.

The second edition of *Taras Bulba* was created simultaneously with Gogol's work on the first volume of *Dead Souls*, i.e. during the period of the greatest ideological and artistic maturity of the writer. This edition has become deeper in its idea, its democratic pathos, more perfect in artistic terms.

The theme of the people's liberation movement is revealed more vividly and more fully here, and the story takes on the character of a national heroic epic to an even greater extent. Battle scenes have acquired a truly epic scope.

To the well-trained but disunited host of the Polish gentry, in which everyone is responsible only for himself, Gogol opposes the closed, iron, imbued with a single impulse, the system of the Cossacks. The attention of the writer is almost fixed on how one or another Cossack fights. Gogol invariably emphasizes the unity, community, and power of the entire Zaporozhye army: "Without any theoretical concept of regularity, they walked with amazing regularity, as if it came from the fact that their hearts and passions beat in one beat with the unity of universal thought. None separated; this mass was not torn anywhere."

The image of *Taras Bulba* is undergoing serious processing: he becomes socially more expressive and psychologically whole. If in the "Mirgorod" edition he quarreled with his comrades because of the unequal division of the spoils () - a detail that clearly contradicted the heroic character of *Taras Bulba* — then in the "final text of the story he "quarreled with those of his comrades who were inclined to the Warsaw side, calling them slaves of Polish lords" ().

We find a similar strengthening of the ideological emphasis in a number of other cases. For example, in the "Mirgorod" edition: "In general, he (*Taras*) was a great hunter before raids and riots" (). In the final edition of 1842, we read: "Restless forever, he considered himself a legitimate defender of Orthodoxy. He voluntarily entered villages where they only complained about the harassment of tenants and the increase of new duties on smoke" (). Thus, *Taras Bulba* turns from a "hunter of raids and riots" into a "legitimate" defender of the oppressed people. The patriotic sound of the image is enhanced. It is in the second edition that *Taras* delivers his speech about "what our partnership is."

In working on the final text of *Taras Bulba*, Gogol undoubtedly took into account the artistic experience of Pushkin's historical prose. It was in the second edition that the story acquired that realistic completeness and completeness of the poetic form that distinguishes this great work of Russian classical literature.

"*Taras Bulba*" is Gogol's first work in which he turned to the image of the national liberation struggle of the Ukrainian people. It is enough to recall the news "Terrible Revenge". Almost simultaneously, but somewhat artistically, Gogol tried to solve the historical theme that employed him in the unfinished novel "The Hetman", on which he worked in the early 30s. The fragments of the novel that have come down to us make it possible to judge the breadth, but at the same time about the well-known inconsistency of Gogol's plan.

Realistic tendencies in the depiction of major historical events, as well as some fictional characters, unexpectedly collided here with the techniques of the old, romantic school, and the work began to lose its inner artistic integrity. Probably sensing this, Gogol lost interest in the novel and left it unfinished. But the experience that the writer gained in the process of working on "Terrible Revenge" and "Hoffman", but passed for him in vain.

In the center of "*Taras Bulba*" is a heroic image of the people fighting for their freedom and independence. Never before in Russian literature has the scope and expanse of people's life been so fully and vividly depicted. Each of the heroes of the story, no matter how individual and peculiar, feels like an integral part of people's life. In the boundless confluence of a person's personal interests with the interests of the people — the ideological pathos of this work.

Zaporozhye Sich in the image of Gogol is the kingdom of freedom and equality, it is a free republic in which people of a wide scope of soul live, absolutely free and equal, where strong, courageous characters are brought up, for whom there is nothing higher than the interests of the people than the freedom and independence of the motherland.

"*Taras Bulba*" is one of the most beautiful poetic creations of Russian fiction. The depth and capacity of the characters of Gogol's heroes harmonizes with the perfection of the compositional structure of the story and the striking completeness of all elements of its style.

So, we can draw a number of conclusions about N. V. Gogol's understanding of history.

The historical novel "Taras Bulba", at first glance, differs from other works included in the cycle "Mirgorod", both in content and style. However, the inclusion of this particular story in the collection was necessary both from the compositional side and from the plot-building side.

In literary studies, "Taras Bulba" is called a novel, a historical novel. But, nevertheless, the breadth of the epic coverage of reality and thoroughness in the depiction of folk life, the diversity of the compositional structure - all this allows us to see in Gogol's work features close to the historical novel.

Unlike the traditional coverage of the historical theme by romantic writers, N. Gogol pays the main attention not to the image of a heroic personality, not abstract – didactic analogies, but to the image of people involved in the maelstrom of historical events.

Gogol quite freely disposed of historical material: he did not reproduce a single specific historical event, almost no real figure, the author, at the same time, created a work of art in which, with ingenious artistic power, he revealed the true history of the people, "all the life of historical Little Russia and in a wonderful, artistic creation he always captured its spiritual image".

The innovative significance of "Taras Bulba" is that the main force of historical events is the people themselves. He is fighting for freedom and independence. Artistic authenticity, epic narrative, depth and capacity of characters are in harmony with the perfection of the compositional structure and the striking completeness of all elements of the style.

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