

THE WORKS OF VICTOR HUGO AND THE DEATH PENALTY

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Abstract. Although Victor Hugo, the great child of the French people, is considered a great novelist in the imagination of many readers today, poetry occupies an important place in his literary heritage. Although the spirit of historicism prevailed in Hugo's novels and most of his dramatic works, he never hesitated to write about the most complex social problems of his time. His stories "Claude Guot" and "The Last Day of the Convict" are proof of our opinion.

The article states that the main idea in the works of Victor Hugo is crime and punishment, using the example of the author Claude, injustice in the bourgeois society creates difficult situations for the representatives of the lower class, which describes people's life difficulties.

Keywords: oppressed people, romance, death penalty, absolute monarchy, executioner, spiritual, society, "Claude Guot", "The Last Day of the Convict".

INTRODUCTION

It would not be wrong to say that the triumph of romanticism in French literature and art of the 1820s and 30s is directly related to the work of Victor Hugo. Although the postulates of classicism, which served the absolute monarchy and dominated French poetry and drama in the 17th and 18th centuries, did not easily give way to romanticism.

The great French writer Victor Hugo entered the literary process as a poet and prose writer in the 20s of the 19th century. His poetry collections Odes et Ballades (1828), Les Orientales (1829), Han d'Islande (1823), Bug Jargal. (1826), although his novels were considered the first exercises, they were recognized in the world of literature as a bold step towards romanticism. These works marked the beginning of the formation of romanticism not only in the work of the young Hugo, but also in French literature.

Especially in theatrical art, the struggle between the two currents was tense. Young writers such as Victor Hugo, Alexandre Dumas père, Alfred de Vigne fought hard for the victory of the romantic theatre. Romantics created works on themes that combined historicity and modernity in dramaturgy, became observers of life under the guise of historians. Rejecting the three rules of classicism, they renounced all of its laws and regularities. Hugo created "Cromwell" (1827), "Marion de Lorme" (1829), "Hernani" (1830), "Le Roi s'amuse" (1832), "Ruy Blas" (1838) drama dealt a sharp blow to the theater of classicism, ensured the victory of the art of romanticism, brought fame to its author.

MATERIALS

Hugo's understanding of the world and society is very far from the divinity and religious beliefs. As the Russian literary critic E. M. Evnina wrote, the concept of "God" for Hugo is synonymous with the concept of "spiritual and moral ideal"; this is an inner voice that tells a person where the truth is and where the lie is; it is the beginning of the good that exists invisibly in the universe, in constant opposition to darkness and evil throughout the universe [3;208].

At the end of his life, Hugo thought, "We want to walk the steep path to progress...God's whole policy is to smooth uneven paths" [1;15].

Progressive views against the death penalty were the main theme of Victor Hugo's work. Because from childhood he witnessed the execution of the death penalty and mobilized all his creative and political power to abolish this type of punishment. The injustice, cruelty and futility of the death penalty are reflected in the author's works Claude Gueux, written in 1834, and The Last Day of the Condemned, written in 1829. The works show Hugo's interest in the plight of the oppressed people.

The book "Le dernier jour d'un condamné" was published in February 1829 by the publisher Charles Gosselin, but the name of the author is not mentioned in it. Three years later, on March 15, 1832, Victor Hugo wrote the novel in his own name and ended it with a long preface.

METHODS

When Hugo talks about the relationship between crime and punishment, the perpetrators are often the victims, not the perpetrators. As the main culprit of this, he considers: "The people are hungry and humble. Poverty leads to crime, plunges into the swamp of prostitution. Have mercy on the people whose sons are kept in prisons and their daughters in brothels. We have a lot of prisoners and prostitutes" [8;80-96]. Based on this, if you pay attention to the fate of Jean Valjean, he once served 5 years in prison for stealing bread: "He would admit his crime. He asked himself: maybe this would not have happened if I had a job. What's the point of making excuses? But the scale of the deed and the punishment are not always equal ... " [7;97].

Victor Hugo's "The Last Day of the Condemned to Death" ends with the following phrases: "The social system of the past was based on three pillars: the priest, the king, and the executioner. It's been a long time since some voice said the gods would go away. Soon another voice shouted, "The kings will go away". The time has come for the third voice to rise up and say: Drive out the executioners too.

At the same time, the stones of the old society begin to fall one by one. They could say that God remains for those who are merciful to God. Those who pardon kings will receive their homelands. There is nothing to say to those who pity the executioners. But do not believe that order will disappear with the executioner. The dome of the future society will not collapse without this terrible key" [5;227].

Hugo describes the injustice in society through the fate of the heroes of the work. If in "The Last Day of the Condemned to Death" the author tries to find the main essence of the crime committed, then in "Claude Gueux" such problems as injustice in society, in themselves lead people to crime. The hero of the work is modest, conscientious and at the same time a very noble philanthropist, who is very clearly manifested in the artistic image. In this story, the writer reflects one of the main social problems of the position of the working class. The real story of Claude Gueux, a worker sentenced to death in 1832. Hugo tried to prevent the execution, to commute the sentence, but all his attempts were unsuccessful.

The main idea of this work is crime and punishment. Using the example of Claude, the author shows how bourgeois society destroys a person. It describes that dishonesty in society creates difficult situations for people of the lower class, which means that no matter how strong-willed people are, the difficulties of life can bend a person, Claude looks much older than his years, through the wrinkles on his face.

"Claude Gueux, honnête ouvrier naguère, voleur désormais, était une figure digne et grave".

Translation: "Claude Gueux, once an honest worker, now a thief, was a dignified and serious figure" (1;23). At this point, the author spoke about the fact that even if a person is extremely humiliated, even if he became a conscious thief, he did not lose his pride.

Il avait le front haut, déjà ridé quoique jeune encore, quelques cheveux gris perdus dans les touffes noires.

Translation: " His forehead was high, already wrinkled although still young, a few gray hairs lost in the black tufts" (1;23). He skillfully described how a person, despite his youth, looks older than his age as a result of difficulties in society, loss of self-esteem and signs of old age. He expressed this situation with the words "déjà" and "encore".

RESULTS

Despite the fact that Hugo believes that the spiritual, spiritual and moral life of the people is determined by space, in the artistic world of his novels, spiritual, spiritual and moral life is primary, and space is only a description of the image.

"Claude Gueux" shows that the hero of the work was an honest worker before he went to prison, he was sent to the Clairvaux prison to serve a sentence for theft, shows how time affects the human psyche and this place brings him to the level of a murderer.

L'homme fut envoyé faire son temps à la maison centrale de Clairvaux. Clairvaux, abbaye dont on a fait une bastille, cellule dont on a fait un cabanon, autel dont on a fait un pilori [4;5].

Clairvaux is a chapel that has become an exile, a cell that has become a cellar, an altar that has become a purgatory [1;22].

This space, as the place where the events of the work unfold, contained the lives of entire characters. Basically, the events of the story begin in prison and continue there until Claude is sentenced to death and killed.

And Honore de Balzac said about the story of V. Hugo "Claude Gueux" (in which human dignity is knocked down, the unjust death sentence to the prisoner is severely condemned), that in such a work the writer shows his brightest talent [2].

Hugo's secret struggle between the warden of the prison and Claude Gueux is very scattered, mutually exclusive, here the struggle is continuous. Where equal forces oppose each other, it is not for nothing that such situations end tragically. However, although the struggle here is not between equal forces in terms of their place in society, in the prison, which is the place of work, the warden of the prison, realizing that the place of Claude Gueux among the prisoners is higher than the chief warden, begins to fight against him through hatred. The struggle between them shows a completely subjective situation in the eyes of others.

The hero of the play swallows his inner feelings and turns to the chief warden of the prison:

Claude, le suivant de près, répondit:

"Monsieur, rendez-moi mon compagnon!"

"Impossible!"

"Monsieur", continua Claude, d'une voix qui aurait ému Satan, je "vous implore de me renvoyer Albin"...

[4].

Translation:

- Sir, give me back my mate.

- Impossible!

- "Monsieur", continued Claude, in a voice that would have moved Satan, I "implore you to send Albin back to me" [1; 41].

This situation in the work shows a break in the sequence of humanism in external relations with hatred in the inner experience of a person and creates an antithesis in the mental state of a person. At the same time, he could barely control his hatred. Since the surrounding prisoners knew of his intentions, they wished very much that this terrible situation did not happen. By this, the author shows that because of injustice in society, good, noble, hardworking people become murderers and criminals. In this place, Claude does not act alone; he unites with the silent benevolence of other prisoners, that is, he unites with the community, with the world of the oppressed, he opposes the oppressors.

He was one of those people who know neither care nor kindness, no considerations, no hard feelings affect them, such people are usually evil, black inside, they burn in the fire of hatred, not knowing what mercy is, they burn, but they cannot warm themselves, because warm, human feelings are alien to their hearts. Such people can be likened to a piece of wood that burns on one side, but does not pass heat to the other [9].

DISCUSSION

At this point, the author can divide people in society into several categories depending on their characteristics, but they do not know what compassion is, they burn in the fire of hatred, but they cannot warm themselves.

Judicial speech by Claude Gueux is a perfect author's monologue in which the writer is confronted with the soulless attitude of bourgeois society towards ordinary people. The government and the chamber pass laws, judges sentence to imprisonment and the death penalty, but do not know the needs and pain of the people.

"Très peu", a déclaré Claude. "Je suis un meurtrier, je suis un voleur; mais je vous demande messieurs du jury, pourquoi ai-je tué? Pourquoi ai-je volé?" [4].

...True, I am a thief and a murderer, yes, I have stolen and killed. But why did I steal? Why did I kill someone? [1;48].

With these words of Claude, the author expressed the fact that representatives of the simple class cannot find answers to their questions anywhere, in any situation, repeating Claude's question even after the verdict has been announced.

Although the main character in this work is Claude Gueux, in the centre of the plot, Claude is in prison for a minor crime. But it can be seen that Claude became a murderer under the influence of this character, who goes to the protagonist named Alben, who gives half of his wealth to Claude and thus wins his love.

The reason for this was mainly the chief inspector of the prison. Feeling Claude's affection for Alben, he tried to torment them by separating them. Through this incident, the author describes the injustice in society, people sentenced to severe punishments even for a small crime, the poor who are groundlessly oppressed by the ruling circles, and no one heeds the pain of the people. That is why society is drowning in a swamp, the struggle with power and protests will not give results, and the poor will not be able to achieve freedom in the near future.

Hugo never stopped saying that "the first need, the first right, the first duty of man is freedom." The French Revolution of 1789 is the main source of inspiration for Hugo's work. He said: "The revolution, the whole revolution, is the source of the literature of the nineteenth century. Romanticism and socialism are one and the same" [6; c. 212].

CONCLUSION

In a word, the English romantics, who worked in the genre of romanticism in European literature of the 19th century, were influenced by German romanticism in their motives for hating tyranny and protecting the poor. This spirit of humanism, the principle of nationalism, found a vivid artistic expression in French romanticism, especially in the work of Hugo. In his stories and novels, Hugo defended and sympathized with humiliated, oppressed, honest people. No matter how conscientious the hero of the novel "Claude Gueux" was, he became a victim of the injustice of society. He became a criminal and was sentenced to death.

Comparing the events of the author's "Claude Gueux" with the events of "The Last Day of the Condemned to Death", one can observe the ideological growth in Hugo's work. Claude Gueux's murder of a government official is portrayed not as a crime, but as an act of social justice.

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