Введение. Актуальность исследования заключается в характеристике педагогических идей видного российского педагогического деятеля, прогрессивного публициста второй половины XIX в. Н.В. Шелгунова (1824-1891), представляющих в настоящее время теоретический и практический интерес для работников сферы образования в связи с современным реформированием этой важнейшей сферы духовной жизни общества. Целью исследования является анализ содержания педагогических воззрений Шелгунова, который в своих работах давал объективную, нередко критическую оценку трудам крупных деятелей российского образования, таких как И.И. Паульсон, Л.Н. Толстой, В.И. Водовозов и др.

Материалы и методы. Автором используются методы анализа научно-педагогической литературы и биографический метод, а также исторический и аксиологический (ценостный) методологические подходы. В ходе работы над материалом использовался ряд источников российских и зарубежных исследователей, а также самого Н.В. Шелгунова.

Результаты. Н.В. Шелгунов вошел в российскую историю как видный социал-демократический деятель, как автор глубоких, острых и интересных публикаций, которые обсуждались передовой частью российского социума и в определенной степени способствовали формированию во второй половине XIX века в России общественного мнения, выражавшегося как в формулировании осознанно выраженных требований к властям со стороны прогрессивной части общества, в частности, в вопросе об открытии новых учебных заведений, так и в связи с оценкой качества выпускаемых учебников и учебных пособий. Шелгунов отмечал положительные стороны школьных книг и их недостатки. Острая критика Шелгуновым деятельности министерства народного просвещения стимулировала передовую часть тогдашней российской интеллигенции к практической деятельности в интересах развития образования. Вплоть до настоящего времени представляют интерес статьи Шелгунова, характеризующие в историческом плане путь, пройденный российским образованием.

Обсуждение и выводы. В своих трудах Шелгунов анализировал методические пособия и учебные книги И.И. Паульсона, В.И. Водовозова, Л.Н. Толстого и других ученых, давал им объективную, а и иногда критическую оценку. Он также подверг критике составление женского образования в России, хотя к тому времени открылось много учебных заведений для женщин. Его статьи «Письма о воспитании», «Чего не знают женщины» и др. высоко оценивались специалистами; они стали отправной точкой в разработке последующими поколениями российских ученых-педагогов проблем воспитания, включая семейное воспитание.

Общественный деятель и педагогический публицист Н.В. Шелгунов проявил себя как один из самых заметных представителей революционно-демократического движения в России второй половины XIX в. Войдя в состав организации «Земля и воля», он осуществлял практическую деятельность, направленную, как он считал, на улучшение жизни народа. Его педагогические труды внесли существенный вклад в сокровищницу педагогического знания, прежде всего, в сфере истории образования и организации просвещения российских граждан, а поэтому заслуживают дальнейшего изучения со стороны историков образования.

Ключевые слова: Шелгунов, Михайлов, Чернышевский, демократическое движение в России в 1880-е гг., российская педагогическая публицистика, классическое и реальное образование

Ссылка для цитирования: Помелов В. Б. Видный российский общественный деятель XIX в. Н.В. Шелгунов и его педагогические взгляды. К 200-летию со дня рождения // Перспективы науки и образования. 2024. № 3 (69). С. 573–586. doi: 10.32744/pse.2024.3.35
V. B. POMELOV

A prominent Russian public figure of the XIX century
N.V. Shelgunov and his pedagogical views.
To the 200th anniversary of his birth

Annotation. The relevance of the research lies in the characterization of the pedagogical ideas of the prominent Russian pedagogical figure, progressive publicist of the second half of the XIX century N.V. Shelgunov (1824-1891), which are currently of theoretical and practical interest to workers in the field of education in connection with the reform of this most important sphere of the spiritual life of society. The purpose of the study is to analyze the content of Shelgunov’s pedagogical views; critical assessments expressed by him in relation to a number of works by figures of Russian education of his time (I.I. Paulson, L.N. Tolstoy, V.I. Vodovozov, etc.) are given. An assessment of Shelgunov’s contribution to Russian pedagogical thought is shown. The article was prepared in connection with the 200th anniversary of his birth.

Materials and methods. The author uses methods of analysis of scientific and pedagogical literature and the biographical method, as well as historical and axiological (value) methodological approaches. During the work on the material, a number of sources of Russian and foreign researchers, as well as N.V. Shelgunov himself, were used.

Results. N.V. Shelgunov entered Russian history as a prominent social democratic figure, as the author of deep, acute and interesting publications that were discussed by the advanced part of Russian society and to a certain extent contributed to the formation of public opinion in Russia in the second half of the XIX century, expressed both in the formulation of consciously expressed demands to the authorities from the progressive part of society, in particular, in the issue of opening new educational institutions, and in connection with the assessment of the quality of textbooks and teaching aids produced for the national school. Shelgunov noted positive sides of school books and their disadvantages. His sharp criticism of activities of the ministry of public education and its head, D.A. Tolstoy, stimulated the advanced part of the then Russian intelligentsia to practice in the interests of educational development. Up to the present time, Shelgunov’s articles are of interest, characterizing in historical terms the path traversed by Russian education.

Discussion and conclusions. In his writings, Shelgunov analyzed methodological manuals and study books by I.I. Paulson, V.I. Vodovozov, L.N. Tolstoy and other scientists, gave them an objective, and sometimes critical assessment. He criticized also the state of women education in Russia, although by that time many educational institutions for women had opened. His articles “Letters on education”, “What women don’t know”, etc., were highly appreciated by experts; they became the starting point for subsequent generations of Russian scientists and teachers to develop problems of education, including family education.

Public figure and pedagogical publicist N.V. Shelgunov proved himself as one of the most prominent representatives of the revolutionary democratic movement in Russia in the second half of the XIX century. Having joined the organization “Land and Freedom”, he carried out practical activities aimed, as he believed, at improving the lives of the people. His pedagogical works made a significant contribution to the treasury of pedagogical knowledge, primarily in the field of the history of education and organization of education of Russian citizens.

Keywords: Shelgunov, Mikhailov, Chernyshevsky, the democratic movement in Russia in the 1880s, Russian pedagogical journalism, classical and real education

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The problem of education is of a global nature and is of great importance for the development of every country and people. The United Nations has adopted *Global program on education after 2015*, aimed at improving its quality and ensuring access to it for all people in the world, and based on principles of sustainable development of society, ensuring human rights and gender equality, inclusiveness and quality of educational services. The UN Post-2015 Education Initiative aims to continue and expand achievements of *Millennium Declaration*, as well as to take into account new challenges and requirements in the field of education. To achieve this goal, the following tasks were identified: increasing access to education for all, including children, youth and adults; improving the quality of education, including enhancement curricula, teaching methods and knowledge; promoting inclusive education that takes into account the needs and characteristics of each student, including children with special educational needs and migrants; ensuring equality gender in education and elimination of discrimination based on gender; support for the professional development of teachers and raising their status in society; expanding access to information and communication technologies in education. The Global Education Agenda defines the main directions for the promotion of education, including the development of early childhood, improving the quality of all levels of education [1].

Russian education, as part of the global educational system, is also in constant need of updating and improvement. In modern conditions of reforming education, it seems timely and relevant to address modern domestic, as well as foreign, pedagogical researchers to the historical heritage of theorists and practitioners of education of the past. The truly profound, but, unfortunately, sometimes currently forgotten works of our predecessors, scientists of the XIX-XX centuries, often contain valuable, far from having exhausted its didactic and methodological potential, which could be successfully applied in modern education. Currently, some foreign scientific pedagogical publications, despite the known difficulties, acquaint their readers with the experience of building the education system in Russia in various historical periods.

Publications describe, for example, administrative and methodological innovations of the first years of Soviet power [2]. Researchers are interested in various forms of educational organization in the Soviet country [3]. A search is underway for new sources of studying Soviet education [4]. The issues include even the art of illustrating children's books in our country [5]. Important attention is paid to the analysis of the influence of the Soviet education system on schools of socialist commonwealth countries in the post-war period [6]; these countries have been under the direct influence of the USSR for a long time [7]. In the same decades, Marxism has left a powerful mark on the education systems of capitalist countries [8; 9]. Modern authors strive to study the problem of students and teachers in the emigration [10]. The pedagogical path of especially significant figures of education often becomes the central point of numerous studies [11]. Many researchers focus on the well-being of a child, a favorable psychological climate, which, in principle, is achievable in a particular school regardless of social conditions [12]. At the same time, a thorough analysis of the historical and pedagogical literature of recent years shows that extremely insufficient attention is paid in Russian historical and pedagogical research to the development of the issue of studying the value heritage of advanced Russian teachers.
of the past, in particular, N.V. Shelgunov, although, in general, the works of Russian publicists, writers and journalists of the XIX century are reflected in the works of modern foreign authors, for example, O. Boele [13].

The theoretical legacy of N.V. Shelgunov is periodically addressed by domestic and foreign researchers. Thus, the famous Russian philosopher F.A. Gaida refers him to one of those populist publicists, along with P.N. Tkachev, who "adopted" the term "intelligentsia", and in its non-theological understanding [14]. N.G.O. Pereira conducted a study in which he linked the Russian intelligentsia, including N.V. Shelgunov, with the future of this country [15]. The objects of the economist V.I. Marshev's comparative analysis of the management of the Russian state and private economy in the 19th century were representatives of the four main socio-political movements in Russia that existed in Russia during the period under review: the revolutionary democrats, the bourgeoisie, the proletariat and the narodniks, among whom N.V. Shelgunov stood out; the author in his analysis refers to his works "The Tax question", "Internal Review", etc. [16].

An analysis of the works connected in one way or another with the name of N.V. Shelgunov shows that this extraordinary personality has left his unique mark on the history of Russia. At the same time, however, his pedagogical works remain practically unexplored. The collection of his selected works in one volume was last published in 1954. This means that modern Russian and especially foreign pedagogical figures, scientists and practitioners are actually deprived of an opportunity to properly evaluate ideas and views of this prominent representative of the democratic movement in Russia in the second half of the XIXth century.

Meanwhile, he was a truly prominent teacher-publicist, whose opinion was listened to equally attentively by his like-minded people and strict opponents. That’s why the purpose of the study is to analyze the content of Shelgunov’s pedagogical views, who in his works gave an objective, often critical assessment of works of major figures in Russian education, such as I.I. Paulson, L.N. Tolstoy, V.I. Vodovozov, etc., as well the ministry of public education D.A. Tolstoy. The achievement of this goal is realized through the use of a number of methods, among which the main is an analysis of scientific works of N.V. Shelgunov.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The leading research methods are the analysis of scientific literature and the biographical method, as well as historical and axiological (value) methodological approaches. The author used the materials of some leading scientific and pedagogical periodicals of foreign and domestic origin, including «History of Education & Children's Literature», «International Journal of Latest Research in Humanities and Social Science», «Pedagogy. Questions of theory and practice», as well as the works of Russian and foreign researchers of historical and pedagogical science; among them C. Dorena, K. Meta, L. Somogyvári, Wu Zijing, S. Roszak, D. Konieczka-Śliwińska, E. Sartika1, S. Urbayatun, L. Klimovich, V. Suvorov, L. Shaipak published in reputable journals.

**RESULTS**

The very name of N.V. Shelgunov is now virtually forgotten, but at one time he was one of those intellectuals who were called rulers of thoughts. His articles in "thick" journals were as eagerly awaited by University students in the 1870s and 1880s as their fathers had been
waiting for V.G. Belinsky's articles three decades earlier [17, p. 11]. N.V. Shelgunov picked up the banner of progressive Russian pedagogical thought, which by that time had lost its recognized leaders in the persons of K.D. Ushinsky, N.I. Pirogov, P.G. Redkin, etc. [18].

N.V. Shelgunov was born in St. Petersburg on November 22 (December 4), 1824 in the family of an official. Shelgunov's great-grandfather and grandfather were sailors, and his father Vasily Ivanovich served in the civil department; he died suddenly while hunting when Nikolai was only three years old. At the age of five, he was sent to the Alexandrovsky orphan cadet corps. A nine-year-old boy who showed extraordinary abilities in 1833 was accepted into the St. Petersburg practical forestry Institute of the ministry of finance. Subsequently, Shelgunov remembered with a kind word teachers Sorokin, as well as Komarov, who was a friend of Belinsky. They introduced their students to the works of modern progressive Russian literature. In 1837, the Institute was transformed into a Forest and Boundary Institute, and became in fact a military educational institution. Shelgunov saw a positive side in this: army drill, according to him, developed a sense of camaraderie and chivalry. Theoretical and military classes were combined with trips to practical work at the Losiny Ostrov forest dacha in Moscow.

In 1841, Shelgunov graduated from the first-class course with the rank of second lieutenant and the title of forest taxator. He joined the forestry department of the ministry in his specialty. In the warm season, Nikolay Vasilyevich traveled all over Russia, solved forest management issues, and in winter he prepared new expeditions and processed the materials received. So, in 1849, Shelgunov was sent to the Simbirsk province to establish a forest cottage there. Constant trips required a lot of physical and moral effort from him, and caused a lot of trouble and inconvenience. And although the work was poorly paid, it enriched Nikolai with knowledge of various aspects of Russian reality, provided material for future literary experiments. His first articles published in special journals were on the profile of his work. He was also the author of a number of brochures, for example, "Forest technology", "Forestry for private owners", "History of Russian forest legislation", etc. [19, p. 186].

On business, he had to visit Samara, where he met academician, state councilor P.P. Pekarsky (1827-1872). He was a prominent historian and literary critic, the author of numerous scientific papers. Suffice it to say that Pyotr Petrovich compiled the first detailed biography of M.V. Lomonosov. It was acquaintance with Pekarsky that made a revolution in Shelgunov's mind. Nikolay Vasilyevich became interested in history and even wrote a great work on the history of Russian forest legislation, for which he even received an award – a diamond ring and a prize from the ministry of state property. In 1850, he married his great-niece Lyudmila Petrovna Michaelis (1832-1901), who was brought up in the family of the publisher of the journal "Son of Fatherland" Konstantin Petrovich Masalsky (1802-1861). She proved herself as a writer, memoirist, translator of novels by European authors, in particular, J. Verne, Ch. Dickens.

In 1851, Shelgunov returned to St. Petersburg and again began serving in the forestry department. At this time, he began a strong relationship with representatives of literary circles. He became friends with N.G. Chernyshevsky (1828-1889) and M.L. Mikhailov (1829-1865). In 1856, Shelgunov was offered a place in the Lisinsky educational forestry located in the Tsarskoye Selo district; it was a place for practical training of the officer class of the foresters corps. Shelgunov was supposed to direct practical work in summer and give lectures in winter. But he didn’t consider himself sufficiently prepared for these duties, and asked for a business trip abroad in order to gain the necessary experience in one of the specialized Universities. Returning to Russia in the autumn of 1857, he began to work in
forestry. But in May 1858 he was again offered a business trip to Europe, where he stayed for about a year and a half.

Acquaintance with the works of A.I. Herzen and a personal meeting with him in London had a great impact on the formation of N.V. Shelgunov's socio-political views. The 1860s were saturated with the spirit of revolutionary democracy; they were a time when, "everyone wanted to think, read and study, and when everyone who had something behind his soul wanted to express it loudly. The thought that had been sleeping up to that time wavered and began to work. Its impulse was strong and the tasks were enormous. It wasn't only about today that we were talking about here, – the destinies of future generations, the future destinies of the whole of Russia were being considered and decided. In any case, it seemed so to the participants of the revolutionary movement. This tempting work attracted all the more gifted and capable people and put forward a lot of young publicists, writers and scientists whose names were forever associated with the history of the Russian enlightenment and with the brilliant but short moment of the 1860s, which for a long time gave its direction to the intellectual movement of Russia" [20, p. 7-8]. In such terms he assessed the spiritual atmosphere of the time.

The press was a significant force in those years, and Shelgunov sought to use it to express his socio-political and pedagogical views. His journalistic activity began in Sovremennik, when it was headed by N.A. Dobrolyubov and N.G. Chernyshyevsky. The most notable article by Shelgunov was the material "The Working Proletariat in England and France" (Sovremennik, 1861), which was based on the famous book by F. Engels' "The Situation of the working class in England." It turned out that here Shelgunov acted in many ways as an epigon.

At the same time, it wasn’t only his first article in which pedagogical problems were touched upon, but also one of the first publications in the Russian press, where the question of the connection between the upbringing of children and social environment was raised. Considering the question of preparing children of proletariat for life, Shelgunov convincingly showed that the upbringing of a child at an early age mainly depended on the financial situation of a family. A child is especially closely attached to a mother. But under the capitalist system, this attachment is painfully torn due to the need for a woman to go to work and leave her child homeless. So, N.V. Shelgunov concludes, it's necessary to seek the creation of another social system in which a woman will receive more favorable conditions for the upbringing of her children [21, p. 218].

In 1861, Nikolay Shelgunov became a co-owner of Vek (Centenary) newspaper, which allowed him to directly address readers with his views. Shelgunov enthusiastically studied the works of V.G. Belinsky and N.G. Chernyshyevsky, and at the end of the 1850s he joined the secret revolutionary organization "Earth and Will", which included brothers A.A. and N.A. Serno-Solovyevich, M.L. Mikhailov, A.A. Sleptsov, N.N. Obruchev, V.S. Kurochkin and some other writers. Chernyshyevsky, as a leader, saw the purpose of the organization in the preparation of the peasant revolution. To achieve this goal, the members of the organization had to travel around the country to establish activities of secret circles. Shelgunov had to go to Siberia. However, he failed to do much in practical terms. On behalf of Chernyshyevsky in 1861, he, in particular, wrote two proclamations, "To younger generation" and "To soldiers". Shelgunov believed that peasant reform didn't solve the problem of liberation of peasants. In his opinion, the land shouldn't belong to a person, but to a country. Each community should have its own allotment. Personal land ownership shouldn't be allowed, because it would inevitably lead to a sharp stratification of peasantry which would cause social unrest.
He also believed that an emperor, "anointed with oil in the Assumption Cathedral, should be replaced by an elected foreman" [21, p. 217].

In 1862, a member of the organization V.D. Kostomarov betrayed his associates. The fate of many of them was tragic. Chernyshevsky, after a civil execution, was sent into exile in Eastern Siberia for many years. Shelgunov was held for 20 months in the casemates of the Alekseevsky Ravelin of the Peter and Paul Fortress, and then sent to a settlement under the supervision of police to the Vologda province. For almost 15 years he lived in different cities: first in Totma, Nikolsk, Kadnikov and then Vologda, Kaluga, Vyborg, Veliky Novgorod. It was only at the age of 53 that he received permission to settle in the capital.

During the years of exile, N.V. Shelgunov did a lot of literary work. But the nature of his writings has changed dramatically. Now he paid all his attention to the popularization of historical, socio-political, economic, literary and pedagogical knowledge. He collaborated with leading Russian journals: Sovremennik (since 1861), Russian Word (since 1865), Delo (since 1867), as well as with the newspaper Nedelya (since 1872). Since 1880 he was the editor of the journal Delo (Matter). In 1884, he was accused of having ties with the People's Will, and again thrown into the Peter and Paul Fortress. However, it wasn’t possible to prove the accusation, but he was released, however, with a ban on editorial activity.

The last six years of his life, – he died on April 12 (24), 1891, – Shelgunov collaborated in the journal "Russian Thought", where he wrote monthly a feuilleton under heading "Essays on Russian life". In total, 65 of them were published, and the last Shelgunov dictated, being already seriously ill [22, p. 114]. St. Petersburg workers highly appreciated the work of N.V. Shelgunov. Shortly before his death, they visited him and gave him an address full of grateful words to a man who became one of leaders of progressive youth. "You have shown us how to fight," workers wrote. The funeral of Shelgunov turned, according to V.I. Lenin’s article "First Lessons", into a big political demonstration. A wreath with words "To the deceased with a banner in his hands" stood out on the grave [22, p. 114].

**N.V. Shelgunov's pedagogical views**

N.V. Shelgunov entered Russian history as a revolutionary democrat, a public and political figure, an author of numerous, currently mostly forgotten, journalistic works on problems of economics, philosophy, history, literature, as well as pedagogy. His work was multifaceted. We will consider only that part of it, which is connected with pedagogical ideas. Most of N.V. Shelgunov's works were critical. He wasn’t a practical teacher, but in his works he deeply revealed the essence of contemporary pedagogical problems.

Among the most important of them, he referred to the so-called "classical" reform of D.A. Tolstoy. He criticized it for its sterility, one-sidedness and anti-democratic nature [23, p. 320]. In an article in Delo (1880, no. 5), Shelgunov sums up "Results of D.A. Tolstoy's 14-year activity in the Ministry of Public Education" (it’s the article’s title). At the same time it’s one of the first to give a generalizing sketch of the development of education in Russia. The essay contains many interesting facts, observations and generalizations. Thus, he notes that under Peter I and Catherine II, education had a practical, real character and was distinguished by greater freedom in the sense of choosing means and methods of teaching. Hamburg and Göttingen newspapers, Moscow and St. Petersburg Vedomosti were issued for reading to pupils of the St. Petersburg National School, founded under Catherine II. Literary experiments of pupils were published in the same school. However, under Emperor Pavel I (1796-1801), the strictest book censorship was introduced.
Shelgunov introduces the reader to the speech of Professor Geim of Moscow University (1799) "On the state of sciences in Russia under the patronage of Pavel I", in which this professor pointed out that "knowledge and the so-called enlightenment is often used for evil through seductive melodies of liberty of current sirens and through deceptive ghosts of imaginary happiness. European governments, calmly looking at this debauchery, finally had the right reason to regret their indifference. How happy Russia should honor itself because scholarship in it is protected by prudent restrictions from the destructive ulcer of false teaching that arises everywhere" [23, p. 320]. During the reign of Pavel I, all private printing houses were closed, travel abroad was strictly prohibited, and the import of literature, even music, was banned. As soon as he ascended the throne in 1801, Alexander I immediately abolished these restrictions. The real direction prevailed in gymnasiums. "Cruel" teachers had to be "recognized" and "warned" [23, p. 321].

In the initial period of the reign of Alexander I, University was viewed not as an educational institution, but as a "scientific corporation for teaching sciences" [23, p. 322]. Every professor was given the freedom to teach, and even deans weren’t allowed to attend lectures, it was considered humiliating. The then student S.T. Aksakov recalled: "Students had a complete contempt for everything low and mean and a deep respect for everything honest and high. The memory of such years lives inseparably with a person and imperceptibly for him illuminates and directs him for the rest of his life, and wherever circumstances drag him, no matter how trampled into mud, it takes him on an honest and straight road" [23, p. 323].

The first cornerstone of the policy of the minister of public education D.A. Tolstoy (1866-1880), Shelgunov noted, was the opinion that teachers of public schools should be graduates of theological seminaries, and the second cornerstone was classicism. With the liberation of peasantry from serfdom, there was a need to train a significant number of specialists of various profiles. The time of classicism was a thing of the past, everyone understood this, including D.A. Tolstoy himself, but, nevertheless, he continued his previous educational policy. "Realism" opposed not only "classicism". He opposed, first of all, the church and monarchical foundations, whose loyal servant was the minister of public education [23, p. 324].

N.V. Shelgunov cites in his article a number of responses from metropolitan publications in connection with Tolstoy’s resignation. In particular, he writes: "It’s difficult to remember when St. Petersburg society celebrated Christ's Sunday with more joyful and bright hopes, as this time" [23, p. 324]. This article by Shelgunov is valuable for the modern reader, first of all, for its factual content; it contains such details that could have disappeared without a trace over years by now.

Touching upon the problem of the correlation in teaching of classical and real sciences in a modern Russian school, N.V. Shelgunov called it a curiosity that while in Europe a decisive turn of public opinion is being made towards a harmonious combination of humanities and real knowledge, when ignorance is considered both neglect of verbal sciences by realists and neglect of studying laws of nature on the part of wordsmiths, we come out into the world of enlightenment with a philological system and, abandoning our native language and living languages, carefully hammer Greek and Latin lexicons into memory [23, p. 340].

N.V. Shelgunov saw a definite alternative to ministerial schools and parochial schools in opening of zemstvo schools. In the article "About the Zemstvo school", he noted that zemstvo schools had to endure attacks both from progressive circles who believed that these schools should more vigorously inculcate literacy, and from reactionary press, which condemned them for neglecting religious education and saturating programs with secular, natural science material [20, p. 356]. Starting in 1864, zemstvo schools were opposed by
parochial schools, which received significant allocations from the tsarist government, which hoped that they would displace zemstvo schools. The latter were on the verge of being banned. And it was at this moment that Shelgunov wrote an article in their defense. He showed benefits that zemstvo had been doing for two decades in the field of educating people. An article by a prominent publicist for some time suspended the flow of criticism against zemstvo. He wrote that just a few decades ago, peasants didn’t demand anything more from school than to teach a child to read a horology, and now peasants demand reading not only divine books, but also civil ones, an ability to write a letter well, to make calculations on accounts, i.e. practical knowledge. In outdated "home" schools with a sexton teacher or a retired soldier, a peasant gives his children to study only when there is no zemstvo school nearby.

The lines of Shelgunov's article are imbued with sympathy for a people's teacher. He writes with pain that authorities still look at a teacher as a thing that can always be moved and disposed of at their discretion. A teacher should live in peace with a priest, because he can always harm him. In children alone, he finds moral support, he rests his soul with them. But other figures propose to make school also professional, where a child would receive basics of any profession. That would look good. But it’s impossible to entrust all this to a teacher. Having worked with children for six to seven hours, he needs rest; besides, notebooks and preparation for the next school day are waiting for him at home again [24, p. 367].

N.V. Shelgunov quotes from various newspapers in the article: "Education of the people brings only harm. Village children in schools learn immorality and disbelief in God." In contrast to this "dark kingdom" he opposes the names of "first teachers", such as Ushinsky, Vodovozov, Paulson, Maksimovich, Kosinsky, Korf, Blinov, Tikhomirov, etc., whose names will remain forever in the history of public education in Russia. At the same time, giving an overview of the methodological activities of these wonderful teachers, he was far from unconditional eulogies for them. So, he writes that, for example, books of I.I. Paulson sin with moral teachings and "stretches of virtuous feelings", and therefore don’t make a "real impression on children." V.I. Vodovozov is sometimes not interesting and "dry." Tolstoy's children's books are liked by children more, but he doesn’t give children new knowledge and cares only about the development of feelings and imagination. In the sense of transferring useful knowledge, he gives an advantage to Ushinsky.

N.V. Shelgunov was particularly active in responding to L.N. Tolstoy's pedagogical ideas. In all probability, he was the most serious pedagogical critic of the "ABC" and "Reading Books" of the great writer. Shelgunov wasn’t embarrassed by the high authority of the great Russian writer; he believed that since Leo Tolstoy was an extraordinary man, then, consequently, he should be treated more strictly. Noting Tolstoy's desire to rise above German methodical pedantry, Shelgunov, at the same time, called his "The New Alphabet", nothing more or less "an ancient alphabet, unusually monotonous, over which every child will fall asleep". He sees the main drawback in the absence of real, practical content, in the saturation of its fabulousness. Tolstoy, Shelgunov writes, gives words, not concepts; he writes about lions, monkeys, eagles, and there are no pictures of these animals, so the material is far from being understood by children [21, pp. 227-228].

N.V. Shelgunov criticized the "Guide to the Russian Alphabet" by Vodovozov. He believed that the main mistake of writers-teachers, including Vodovozov, consists in excessive pedantry, in which the transition from the known to the unknown in their methodological manuals goes in such small steps that deprives children of mental independence; the head at the same time becomes an "unnecessary thing". The author, according to Shelgunov, instills
thinking habits in children, forcing children to memorize minor details, for example, what
shape a bird’s beak has, etc. Vodovozov replied that these tasks are given to children "for
mental gymnastics," and the content in this case doesn’t matter of significant importance [21,
p. 228]. However, Shelgunov didn’t agree with this formulation of the question and stated
that the aimless exercise of the mind, as well as the body, is the most inhuman kind of hard
labor, which entails immoral and destructive consequences, since it dulls a person and turns
him into an idiot. Paying tribute to the sharp, observant mind of N.V. Shelgunov, the accuracy
of many of his statements and the fairness of his opinions, it should be borne in mind that
in some cases he, like another prominent critic of the time Pisarev, as well as Tolstoy, often
polemically sharpened the thought expressed, sometimes bringing it to absurd.

In addition, his opinions on this or that issue can’t be considered as the absolute truth.
It’s important to remember that the above-mentioned authors of textbooks weren’t only
theorists of pedagogy, but also practical teachers who used their own textbooks directly in
work with children. And this is the strength of their didactic position. At the same time, it
should also be noted that he saw a fundamental difference between reactionaries from the
enlightenment and teachers who created their own textbooks, albeit not always perfect.
But, in general, his criticism has always been constructive, although sometimes too harsh.

In 1875, a large article by N.V. Shelgunov "Pedagogical Confusion" was published in the
journal Delo (no. 4). In it, he gives a detailed critical analysis of the pedagogy course compiled
by Mikhail Borisovich Chistyakov (1809-1885), a teacher of the theory of fine literature and
pedagogy at the Emperor NikolayI Women’s Institute in St. Petersburg, the author-compiler
of such books as "Novellas and Fairy Tales for Children", "Historical Novellas and Stories",
"Essay of the Theory of Fine Literature" and others. His course of pedagogy summarized the
experience of teaching the author himself.

N.V. Shelgunov criticizes the author for idealism and separation from the natural and
social environment. At one time, Zh.–Zh. Rousseau, frightened by the complexity of the
social environment, placed his Emil on a "desert island", "deprived" his parents, assigned him
a bunch of tutors. The talent in depicting individual pedagogical influences, the undoubted
literary talent of the French utopian was combined with his naivety, faith in the possibility
of breeding a "new breed" of people in the bosom of nature. However, it’s impossible to
live in society and be independent of it. Europe forgave Rousseau’s naivety long ago," writes
N.V. Shelgunov, "because his theories opened sight to the blind. It’s unlikely that Chistyakov
should have appeared in the same field after Rousseau [25, p. 296].

"Modern pedagogy isn’t at all a speculative attitude to something in general, detached
and isolated, it’s not the science of an uninhabited island, but, on the contrary, the science
of a densely populated land. To teach such a science, you need to know, first of all, both
the earth and people, to know the forces and laws of the human soul" [25, p. 304]. But
this is exactly what Chistyakov doesn’t show, Shelgunov notes. Moreover, he expresses a
sharp condemnation of “abstract pedagogy”, "pedagogy in general", divorced from the life
of society, environment, culture and nature. Further, he criticizes Chistyakov for considering
isolated physical or mental education as education. But this isn’t enough. The task of
education is to guide a child, to make him a full-fledged member of society, to put it in
modern language, to socialize him, i.e. to introduce him into the social environment, to adapt
to the surrounding life, to help navigate it. However, Chistyakov, as if denying "directions in
pedagogy", at the same time seeks to give children a "special direction" [21, p. 230]. And
Shelgunov understands this. Another thing is that they both see the ideal of upbringing in
completely different ways, since they look at this problem from different social positions.
N.V. Shelgunov responded to everything new, advanced and interesting that appeared in pedagogical literature. When in 1884 and 1889 two large volumes "What to read to people?" were published, compiled by Kharkiv teachers under the editorship of the well-known public education activist Christina Danilovna Alchevskaya (1841-1920), he responded to this release with a large friendly article "What to read to people. Publication of Kharkiv teachers" ("Russian Thought", 1890). The two-volume book was an analysis of a large number of literary works that were critically analyzed. For Shelgunov, the conversation about books was rather an occasion to talk about the role of intelligentsia in modern society.

Referring to R. Descartes, who believed that there was no ability distributed more evenly among people than reason, he writes that intelligentsia differs from other people not in that its reason is larger or stronger, but only in that it has an opportunity to work on a large number of facts presented to it by a more developed and diverse life, and therefore it creates a greater number of concepts [21, p. 231].

But in this variety of material lies, at the same time, according to Shelgunov, the danger for the correctness of conclusions of the mind of an intelligent person, because ordinary people live almost exclusively on real, practical facts, which the mind doesn’t have to work on very much, since these facts aren’t numerous, and not particularly diverse and complex. An intelligent mind has more work to do. In addition to practical, real facts, he also has to deal with mental facts, in which there is sometimes so much truth and lies, truth and misconceptions mixed up that, having honestly worked on all this mess, the intelligent mind sometimes creates a conclusion full of lies and mistakes. You won’t find it in workers or peasants who have much fewer facts, fewer concepts and words. But it’s precisely because of this that the Arkhangelsk peasant understands the Minsk and Poltava peasant much better than the employees of two different St. Petersburg newspapers living on the same street [21, p. 231].

Shelgunov was the author of a large work "Letters on education" (1873-1874). It was designed as a popular course of "rational" parenting and was intended for use by mothers, and consists of twenty significant articles. Moreover, the very titles of many of them ("Memory", "Imagination", "Attention", "Word", "Will", "Shame", "Character", etc.), give reason to believe that their author was deeply interested in psychology issues.

The author based his work on the latest data of the then popular "experimental psychology", which was reputed to be a new word in science and introduced an empirical method into psychology instead of the former, dogmatic one. Experimental psychology set as its task the study of "mental" phenomena and their use in pedagogical practice. Skeptics argued that it was impossible to use it in practice. He objected, pointing out that there was no "finished" medicine, however, when a patient was ill, they were sending for a doctor; after all, it’s better to use provisions of "unfinished" science than their own personal, imperfect knowledge and observations [22, p. 120]. With the development of psychology he pinned the hopes for cause of education. He even believed that the speed of human progress would depend solely on how fast the development of psychology would go, which should become as common knowledge as geography and mathematics [22, p. 121].

In the article "What women don’t know", which is part of the same cycle, the author wonders what constitutes a "private, female experience", on the basis of which home education is carried out. According to Shelgunov, it’s impossible to imagine anything more pathetic, limited, embarrassing and blunting than female education. "What insignificance of interests, what narrowness of outlook, what pettiness of feelings and thoughts!" he exclaims bitterly [26, p. 55].
For a woman, he believed, social life is when she goes to visit, to a concert or to the theater, to a ball, to a public celebration. This is the highest limit to which a woman's thought reaches. And such a woman becomes a wife and mother... "Oh, mothers, mothers! We don't curse you, but there's nothing to bless you for. You don't know anything yourself, you didn't think about anything yourself, no one ever taught you this – neither life itself, nor your own mother, and therefore you yourself have nothing to pass on to your children," Shelgunov writes with anger [26, p. 55]. It's clear that such articles of the publicist caused controversy and accusations against him of excessive rigor, bias and insufficient knowledge of the subject of research, in this case, ignorance of the "psychology of women". There is probably a lot of truth in this criticism, but it's also possible that N.V. Shelgunov deliberately sharpened the essence of the topic he characterized in order to attract potential readers to the discussion of his article as much as possible.

In our opinion, N.V. Shelgunov's sharp critical statements were not always justified. For example, as noted above, he wrote about the unsatisfactory state of women's education. But, firstly, the fact that women's education lagged behind men's education was not only a Russian, but also a pan-European, global trend.

Just in Russia at the time of Shelgunov, such wonderful women's educational institutions as, for example, the Smolny Institute of Noble Maidens, opened back in 1764, already existed and actively worked. It was visited by many famous people, including foreign guests, and they noted its advantages over foreign analogues [27]. According to it, similar, albeit more modest, institutions were opened all over the country. We mean, first of all, women's diocesan schools, as well as women's Mariinsky gymnasiums. Both types of educational institutions gave graduates the profession of a teacher.

Also, his criticism of prominent methodist teachers, such as L.N. Tolstoy, I.I. Paulson, and others, was not entirely fair, already due to the fact that all these pedagogical figures worked with children practically, while Shelgunov only assessed their efforts from the outside. At the same time, positive criticism contributed, as a result, to solving the urgent problems facing public education in Russia in those years.

In 2024, the 200th anniversary of the birth of a major public figure of the revolutionary-democratic orientation and publicist Nikolay Vasilyevich Shelgunov is celebrated. Pedagogical heritage of this Russian thinker of the second half of the XIX century, in its main features, remains relevant and valuable today. N.V. Shelgunov believed in the productive forces of the Russian people. At the same time, he critically assessed the Russian monarchical socio-political system, and dreamed of social reconstruction in the country.

The relevance of his works for modern Russian pedagogy is explained by their factual nature, the accuracy of the assessments and definitions expressed by the author, the democracy of Shelgunov as a public figure of his era and the progressive orientation of his position. All this determines the necessity and significance of the article offered to the reader. In many of his pedagogical articles, an idea constantly passes that the correct organization of the upbringing of children is impossible without changing social conditions that directly affect the formation of human characters. He always remained faithful to an idea of social reconstruction of society, and even took part in practical steps aimed at implementing this idea. In some ways, the further development of science corrected
his certain provisions and conclusions. But, in general, he remained in the history of Russian public thought and pedagogy as one of its most prominent representatives, who supported the democratic trend in science, primarily during the stagnant period of the government reaction of the 1870s-1880s.

Further study of the pedagogical heritage of the prominent Russian thinker Shelgunov can serve as an important resource for deepening ideas of Russian historians of education about peculiarities of the process of development of education in Russia in the second half of the XIX century.

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