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**BUREAUCRAT'S PORTRAIT IN «THE ST. PETERSBURG TALES»
BY MYKOLA HOHOL**

Abstract. *The purpose of the study is to find out the degree of reflection of the diverse social characteristics of the Russian capital bureaucracy in the first half of the 19 century, through the lens of a specific literary illustration – «St. Petersburg stories» by M. V. Hohol (N. V. Gogol). The methodology of the study is consisted of methods of scientific criticism, historical-chronological, historical-typological, structural-system methods for the study of belles-lettres as a historical source and the presentation of intrinsic results. The scientific novelty of the research lies in the actualization of the St. Petersburg cycle of stories by M. V. Hohol as a fact of objective reality and a historical source in the history of bureaucracy; proving the likelihood of engaging fiction in the original arsenal of scientific studies on the basis of a prudent critical approach. The Conclusions.* Comprehensive long-term reform of the bureaucratic apparatus of the Russian Empire in the first half of the 19 century caused: significant changes in the quantitative and qualitative composition of the bureaucracy; professionalization of bureaucratic activity and corresponding changes in professional education; mental transformations related to the conscious attitude at the state level to the importance of the official mission; reducing the impact of family, clan ties, that is, patronage, on promotion of business ladders; the growing role of the bureaucracy in the development of the state. The characteristics of class bureaucracy as a special professional group with its own subculture illustrate the images of the Hohol titular adviser and collegial assessor, depicted against the background of the historical era, taking into account the peculiarities of public and private life of the inhabitants of the Northern capital. The specificity of their activities is determined by the functional responsibilities of the representative of each rank. The discovery and disclosure of literary genre-function techniques of the «St. Petersburg Stories» enables a multifaceted presentation of the image of the bureaucrat and the historical context of his life.

Key words: *official, rank, bureaucracy, Russian empire, titular adviser, collegiate assessor, M. V. Hohol (N. V. Gogol), «St. Petersburg stories», fiction.*

ЧИНОВНИЦЬКИЙ ПОРТРЕТ У «ПЕТЕРБУРГСКИХ ПОВЕСТЯХ» МИКОЛИ ГОГОЛЯ

Анотація. Метою дослідження є з'ясування ступеню віддзеркалення різнопланових соціальних характеристик російської столичної бюрократії першої половини XIX ст. через призму специфічного літературного ілюстражу – «Петербургських повестей» Миколи Васильовича Гоголя. **Методологію дослідження** склали методи наукової критики, історико-хронологічний, історико-типологічний, структурно-системний методи дослідження художньої літератури як історичного джерела. **Наукова новизна** дослідження полягає в актуалізації петербурзького циклу повістей М. В. Гоголя як факту об'єктивної даності й історичного джерела з історії бюрократії; доведенні ймовірності залучення художньої літератури в джерельний арсенал наукових студій на ґрунті виваженого критичного підходу. **Висновки.** Комплексне багаторічне реформування бюрократичного апарату Російської імперії першої половини XIX ст. спричинило: суттєві зміни в кількісному та якісному складі чиновництва; професіоналізацію бюрократичної діяльності та відповідні зрушення у фаховій освіті; ментальні трансформації, пов'язані з усвідомленням ставленням на державному рівні до важливості чиновницької місії; зменшення впливу родинних, кланових зв'язків, тобто патронажу, при просуванні службовими сходами; зростання ролі бюрократії у розвитку держави. Характеристики класного чиновництва як особливої професійної групи із власною субкультурою ілюструють образи гоголівських титулярного радника і колезького асесора, зображені на тлі історичної епохи, з урахуванням особливостей суспільного й приватного життя мешканця Північної столиці. Специфіку їх діяльності визначають функційні обов'язки представника кожного чину. Виявлення та розкриття літературних жанрово-функційних прийомів «Петербургських повестей» уможливило багатопланове представлення образу бюрократа та історичного контексту його побутування.

Ключові слова: чиновник, чин, бюрократія, Російська імперія, титулярний радник, колезький асесор, М. В. Гоголь, «Петербургские повести», художня література.

The Problem Statement. In the spring of this year, there is the 210th birthday anniversary of M. V. Hohol (1809 – 1852), the famous Ukrainian writer, who «wrote in Russian and became a classic of Russian literature» (by I. Malkovych). Even during his lifetime, his literary work was the subject of an intense criticism – from an unequivocal admiration to an outright categorical rejection. The indiscriminate discussions always caused the appearance of the genres, the plots, the language, the methods, the techniques, the tasks and mission, the philosophical, religious, geographical contexts, the psychology, the existential motives of creativity, which resulted in a broad Ukrainian, foreign (including Russian) historiography, the film adaptation of works, the annual thematic conferences, the festivals and even a specific area in literary studies – Hohol studies. (Kolesnyk, 2009, p. 135).

Owing to M. Hohol's multifaceted creative heritage the research viability directions are inexhaustible. A special place belongs to the holistic cycle of the works, traditionally called «The St. Petersburg Tales». The specialists include: «Nevskiy Prospect» (1833/1834), «The Nose» (1832/1833), «The Portrait» (1834), «The Overcoat» (1842) and «The Notes of the Crazy» (1835). However, the author considered two more stories – «The Stroller» and «Rome» to belong to «The St. Petersburg Tales», which were different in style, presentation, emotions or the eventslocation. Pursuing the purpose of our research, stated in the title, let us dwell only on some of them, namely, those which most fully illustrate the image of the Russian Empire official in the literary context. It is about «The Nose», «Nevskiy Prospect», «The Notes of the Crazy» and «The Overcoat».

The stories emerged from M. Hohol's pen during the reign of the Russian Tsar Mykola I (Nicholas I) – in the 1830-ies – 1840-ies, and became a kind of the epoch embodiment, a figuratively aesthetic reflection of the reality and its comprehension by a specific person – a Ukrainian in the Russian context. According to M. Hohol's biographers, writing works was a

long and complicated process, accompanied by the story lines changing, rewriting some small or meaningful fragments, detailing them, clarifying the names, the surnames and other techniques of creating a bright background and a rich content. After reading the manuscript, the closest connoisseurs of M. Hohol's work the stories were separately published on the pages of the then popular St. Petersburg, Moscow magazines and almanacs. Even during M. Hohol's life-time, they were called «St. Petersburg» because of the main place of events – «North Palmira». During the Soviet times, the works were combined into a single collection, collectively called «The St. Petersburg Tales» (1934), and in 1938 the first academic collection of the works with a powerful scientific apparatus appeared, the commentary on the differences among the manuscripts, the editorials, and the censorships (Gogol, 1938; Mann, 2016). For almost a century, the story compendium slogan has remained unchanged, and the numerous re-editions and translations indicate the reader's interest in the works of Mykola Hohol, the brilliant master of the word.

The Analysis of Sources and Recent Researches. In the modern academic M. Hohol studies a lot of professional literary and critical studies, devoted to the «The St. Petersburg Tales» can be enumerated. In recent decades, in the context of the anniversary dates of M. Hohol's biography, there have been many sensational, speculative literary studies, provoked by the struggle in the academic circles for the right to the academic primacy of the original ideas (Kolesnyk, 2009, p. 135). Hence the attempts to «(de)mythologize» the plotlines of the stories, to achieve the recognition of the incredible interpretations of the author's intention, to comprehend the phantasmagoria of the stories, to reveal the art of space and time in the Russian imperial context, and etc. Most often, in such studies the following categories are used «the antichrist kingdom», «the mask», «the deformation of a man and world», «a little man», «a parallel world», «the vibration of meanings», «the madness and norm», and the others that mark the modern criticism directions of M. Hohol. Sometimes it looks so boldly interpretative that some experts rightly (and here we agree) declare the unjustified manipulative literary schemes, which depend on the «specific» erudition and concern of the researcher (Krivonos, 2004, p. 140).

Since the reign Catherine II, it has become fashionable to write about bureaucracy not only in the fiction, but also in the press (Mironov, 2000, p. 204). After the great reforms of the second half of the XIXth century the authorities' activities and the management were forever in the field of the society view, a local self-government (Shumilov, 1991, pp. 185–189). The officials in the classical Russian fiction are quite noticeable. Suffice it to mention, the works of O. I. Herzen, F. M. Dostoyevskiy, M. E. Saltykov-Shchedrin, L. M. Tolstoy, A. P. Chekhov and the others. In the XIXth – and early XXth centuries it was actively developed with the desire to expose the peculiarities of the imperial Russian bureaucratic apparatus functioning, metaphorically exaggerating its shortcomings and exposing, in B. Myronov's opinion, the flaws of the supreme power, as well as of the society, a man. (Mironov, 2000, p. 173). Let us also point at the active study of a bureaucratic image as a social phenomenon in the professional historians environment. During recent years in Ukrainian historiography, in our opinion, most of this is written by the famous researcher V. Shandra and her followers (Barmak, 2006; Hlyz, 2015; Degtyarev, 2015; Iesluu, 2018; Shandra, 2005). On the basis of the archival documents and a broad regulatory framework, regulating the bureaucracy of Russia activities, the above-mentioned scholars (V. Shandra and her followers) were able to illustrate the vertical axis and horizontal links of the management system with the local material, to reveal the functional role of the individual officials, to show the characteristic features of the current office culture and the archival affairs, linking their own research studios with other fundamental discourses of the imperial history. Therefore, using literary works as a historical source, it is important to relate them to the content

of authoritative scientific studies, as well as to those studies that focus on the peculiarities of studying the background of fiction writing (Bogdanov, 2011; Zayonchkovskiy, 1978; Mironov, 2000; Moryakova, 1993; Nikolskiy, Filimonov, 2008; Pisarkova, 1995; Fedosyuk, 2012).

The Purpose of the Research. For us, «The St. Petersburg Tales» is of a primarily interest as a source from the history of bureaucracy, although there is no unanimous opinion on the involvement of the literary works in the source arsenal in Ukrainian or foreign historiography. The essence of the counterargument lies in the fact that fiction is always eloquently «woven» from various subjective observations, impressions, experiences and interpretations (often allegorical) of the reality plot or the fictional plot. This issue confuses supporters of the objective reproduction of the past (Sokolov, 2004). In another context, the interpretation of the literary works as a historical source is based on the thesis that, despite their fiction style, they are themselves an objective fact of the reality, and therefore can be unconditionally considered the way they are. Recognizing their right, we consider it justified to correlate the polysemantic texts of fiction by a comparative involving of other sources, to consider the events, depicted in the stories, as the «game of difference» between them and to reconstruct the past.

The Statement of the Basic Material. To comprehend M. Hohol's works as the source, it is important to find out the author's intentions through his life history and the cultural and historical context of St. Petersburg environment as the «document of the era». He comes from the province and a nineteen-year-old boy arrives in St. Petersburg in 1828. For M. Hohol, it was the time of an active creative search, the self-identification and self-affirmation. The family education, the private lessons in Poltava and Nizhyn gymnasium of Higher Sciences were left behind. After finishing gymnasium, he could continue the path, made for generations, and give himself up to teaching, or getting a rank in Poltava region. But M. Hohol made a fateful decision – to change his place of residence in order to find himself in another sphere.

He was not destined to become «a high rank official» in the capital. M. Hohol's bureaucratic career began as a collegiate advisor in the ministry of divisions / apanage. His rank in the ministry turned out to be unprofitable and he got tired of the routine quickly, gray monotony of his professional duties. Having worked in the ministry for almost a year and a half, he left the service, gaining an important life experience and being even more inspired by the literary work that was later embodied in «The St. Petersburg Tales». In other words, M. Hohol was well aware of the everyday life of the officials, especially of the initial levels hierarchy, according to the «Rank Table» of 1722. The tales themselves can be confidently viewed as reflected by M. Hohol's autobiography. In this «parallel scenario», – the unexpected activity and actions that the author came up with the characters, and some of them subsequently took place in his life.

It should be noted that the stories became the debut works of the early M. Hohol's «first» St. Petersburg period of creativity, which he later declared in a letter to M. Pohodin programmatically: «When I wrote my immature and imperfect experiments [...] I wrote them only to try [...] my strength and to get to know whether my pen (feather) was kept in a right manner» (Gogol, 1952, p. 76). In spite of a humble appreciation of their literary value, we can attest to the position of those critics, who believe, that in early works Mykola Hohol emerges with a well-formed artistic and aesthetic concept, organically written through style, content and word.

For the Empire, the first half of the XIXth century became a special time. Almost a century of the bureaucracy development since the entry into force of the «General Regulation» (1720) and the «The Instruction on Ranks» changed the conditions the Russian officials life and service, which became an important prerequisite for a rational organization of power and modernization of the society from upper authorities (Mironov, 2000, p. 163).

A clear division of functions, the job competencies and hierarchical subordination of officials were determined by these and other departmental documents during the XVIIIth century. The civil service itself became an honorable privilege, be in ganobligatory duty previously (Mironov, 2000, p. 163). The peculiarity of the official evolution in the first half of the XIXth century was the activity professionalization, education and a narrow specialization of competences. Before the reforms of the 1860-ies, as noted by B. Myronov, the civil service in Russia became the main place of the career aspirations realization by clever and educated people, capable of taking care of the public interests, earning a living and thinking of the state welfare (Mironov, 2000, p. 169).

An important precondition for the rapid development of the civil service as the institution we consider the competent composition of the heads, for whom education, experience, business qualities, the ability to make management decisions in crisis conditions were of a primary importance. The patronage ties between the bureaucracy were significantly weakened, although not eradicated completely. Reforming the system of the state institutions, improving their functioning organization, increasing the civil service requirements, the officials behavior and discipline affected the management effectiveness. Against this background, the Russian officials gradually approached the ideal type of a bureaucrat, justified by M. Weber, the bureaucracy became progressive, and professional historians, together with lawyers, declared a steady progressive society movement to the rule of law in the XIXth century (Mironov, 2000, p. 174).

So, the beginning of the reign of Mykola I (Nicholas I), the suppression of the constitutional monarchial, the republican movements of the nobility, a powerful codification of the Russian law, the management modernization, the approaches professionalization to the service personnel support, the ultimately important economic phenomena, the emergence of an everyday life quality standards, raising the everyday work quality, improving the changes in the culture of life, the styles in interior design, the architecture and other characteristic features of the current political, economic life of the country, the society, formed a special aesthetics and vision of St. Petersburg that captivated and inspired M. Hohol to write about the consequences of «peering into and vision» of the capital's colouring (Katalkina, 1998, p. 2). The critics recognized the first St. Petersburg works as a worthy start of the writer, calling them a successful «form of time» (Karimova, 2011, p. 3).

«Nevskiy Prospect» is considered to be the basis for the perception of the whole cycle of stories, its compositional and spatio-temporal framework. The action takes place in the capital of the Russian Empire – crowded St. Petersburg. Although the main plot line of the work does not concern the bureaucracy, however, some observations from their lives are presented in the form of interesting, multifaceted sketches about the representatives of the higher world and their «apprentices», St. Petersburg resident of M. Hohol era. The archetypal image of the capital was fleshed out by the glorious singing of Nevskiy Prospect, that lives its diverse life, and M. Hohol became one of the first authors of «St. Petersburg text of Russian literature» (according to V. Toporov).

Among the crowd of «pale» and «bureaucratic» worshipers of the capital center of the Russian Empire – «Big prospect», the face and character of which changes like a picture in the kaleidoscope, depending on the time of day and season, from the continuous human flow M. Hohol «snatched» the official and painted a picture of the external impressions, generated by contemplation (and peeping). Nevskiy Prospect is powerfully «fed» with the round-the-clock and year-round hustle and bustle, created by quietly or quickly moving people, the carriages and phaetons, heading to offices, homes, clubs, salons, cafes, or other attributive attributes. The author

reproduced the hustle and bustle of the city brilliantly. The concentration of the central quarters of the state institutions in the city implied a number of trajectories movements, made by the officials.

That is why, it was possible to meet mainly the lower-ranking official son foot at the avenue – the collegial registrar, the provincial and collegiate secretaries, the titular adviser (the XIVth–IXth grades), as well as the upper classes, but in much smaller numbers up to the Emperor himself. The experts note that before the free from the people terrorism, the Russian sovereigns also had a habit of strolling daily in the central part of the city, in particular, along the Palace embankment, and the common people could «beat their foreheads». Therefore, the number of those who «polished»(strolled) Nevskiy pavement, according to M. Hohol's visual impressions and tenacious observations, corresponded to the proportions of the officials of different classes. At the time of writing the story this proportion was the following: 26 (clerks, who could not have a class rank and noble status): 61 (officials of the XIVth – IXth grades): 11 (officials of the VIIIth – VIIth grades): 2 (officials of the IVth – Vth grades) (Mironov, 2000, p. 207). In general, according to statistics, the number of metropolitan officials increased rapidly during the first half of the XIXth century: from 5011 (in 1804) to 13019 (in 1832) (Tablitsy, 1836). This was due not only to the development of the government imperial system, but also to the comprehensive development of the state. However, the number of the officials per 1,000 population of the Romanov Empire in the 1850-ies was 2, while in France it was 4,6. (Mironov, 2000, p. 203).

Describing the general image of the capital official, referring to the sources and works of the colleagues, it should be noted that the higher bureaucracy of St. Petersburg at that time by 93% consisted of the hereditary nobility representatives (44% among the bureaucrats). The higher bureaucracy representatives had a higher education and a decent level of a financial support (Mironov, 2000, p. 205–206), that made them «noble from an educated society» and wealthy by Russian standards. The experts note that until the revolution in 1917, the high official ranks remained the prerogative of those, who had privileges from birth (Bogdanov, 2011, p. 103). Thus, according to statistics, in 1903, 100% of governors and 93.7% of vice-governors were family nobles (Zayonchkovskiy, 1978, p. 213).

The lower classes officials (the XIVth – the IXth grades) came from all the strata of the population – the impoverished nobility, the townspeople, the peasants, the clergy, the merchants, the perpetrators. Those officials had a different level of education (secondary, elementary, rarely higher education), lower fees for the service, which due to the fall of the paper money rate and the rise of prices in the early XIXth century, significantly decreased as compared to the time of Catherine's II reign. However, during the 1830 – 1850-ies the nominal and real standard of Russian officials living of all ranks increased markedly. According to the national index, among the «clerks» of St. Petersburg, apart from the Russians, there was a high percentage of the Germans (up to 30%), which historically evolved since the time of Peter's I reign (Knappe, Petrovskaya, p. 45). This category of the officials was characterized by an exceptionally responsible attitude to the duties and a clear realization of the management tasks.

In M. Hohol's story the territorial time travel in the central street of St. Petersburg begins with the mentioning of a rare morning drowsy official, who «will pass by with a briefcase under his arm, if the road to the department lies through Nevskiy Prospect» (Gogol, 1970, p. 129). One should say that from 1739 the working hours for the clerk were fixed, and accordingly he had to be in the service from 7 am till 2 pm daily, except for Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays, which, incidentally, there were 21 in the middle of the XIXth century (Mironov, 2000, p. 306). If necessary, the working hours could be extended from 4 pm till 7 pm, or individual tasks could be carried out at home (Mironov, 2000, p. 166). The researchers note that the emperors often

practiced being present at the beginning of the working day (Mironov, 2000, p. 166). So, that «rare official», mentioned by M. Hohol, most likely, rushed to the service at 7 o'clock in the morning, although in the text, we find hidden remarks of another time of the working day beginning.

The situation at the avenue changed at noon, «from two till three in the afternoon» – «the most blessed time» when the officials' working day was over. At that time, the «brothers officials» grew noticeably in number at Nevskiy Prospect, according to M. Hohol. Those who served under the guidance of ministers, governors, other officials, for example, the special-duty officials (from the VIth grade), or the representatives of a foreign board, who differed from «other brothers officials» by «the nobility of their occupations and habits», a remarkable dandyism, the epitome of which, for M. Hohol, were sideburns – «the only ones, with extraordinary and marvelous necktie art, [...] velvety, satin, black, like sable or charcoal, but alas, belonging to only one foreign collegium» because the other officials had the right to wear, «to the greatest trouble», only red sideburns (Gogol, 1990, p. 13). The allegory on «the red sideburns» symbolizes the depth of the chasm between those, who occupied the highest rank, «wonderful positions and services» that «exalt and delight the soul» and see «the subtle treatment of their superiors», and those, who cannot even dream of the different colour sideburns status (Gogol, 1990, p. 13). It was an «exhibition» time for «all the best works of a human being» (Gogol, 1990, p. 14), that is, the officials of the generality class. Their life movement lines did not intersect with their subordinates, even at Nevskiy Prospect, because for them there was a different promenade time – at 3 o'clock pm, when the «spring» suddenly came and everything was covered with green vice-uniform (Gogol, 1990, p. 15). The walks-about of the low ranks clerks, the officials in the «world» is described in detail by M. Hohol. To convey the colour of the author's speech, we submit the text unchanged: «Hungry titular and other advisers try their best to accelerate their the tempo of their walks. Young college registrars, provincial and collegial secretaries hasten to take advantage of the time and walk through Nevskiy Prospect with a posture that shows that they have not been sitting at all for six hours in attendance. But the old collegial secretaries, titular advisers are walking quickly, tapping their heads: they are not there to deal with the passers-by; they have not yet completely separated themselves from their concerns; in their heads there is a jumble (yeralash) and a whole archive of the initiated and unfinished affairs; they see a folder with papers or the full face of the office ruler instead of the signboards» (Gogol, 1990, p. 15). Again, in detail we find a variation of the differences between the bureaucracy – «hungry» titular and other advisers, registrars, secretaries versus «a fat face of the office ruler»; between the bureaucratic public of different age – young «servants», who seek to rise to the highest rank, as evidenced by the slim line of the posture, and the representatives of the older generation, whose hopes have not been fulfilled and who are no longer concerned with the external conditions of life. Indirect M. Hohol's remarks on changing the participants of the «walks about» along Nevskiy Prospect, give the grounds to conclude that there are variations in the working time duration of the higher and lower ranks officials, and simple mathematical calculations «lead» us to finding its beginning at 9 o'clock am and until 3 o'clock pm, the time when the avenue got green from the uniforms.

The twilight completes the artistic, ethical and aesthetic sketches of the day at Nevskiy Prospect. This time is marked with an emotional, passionate M. Hohol's assessment. The young officials, relieving themselves from the service, seek to satiate the heart with amorous pleasures, and then «collegial registrars, provincial and collegial secretaries walk slowly» only to meet the dreamy beauty and «look under the hat of a beautiful lady» (Gogol, 1990, p. 15). The author notes that the collegial registrars, titular and out-of-town councilors will not meet the seniors at dusk, because they spend the evening mostly at home, because they have a family, and, moreover, «the

German cooks, living in their houses, cook very well». The senior officials can afford having a German cook (Gogol, 1990, p. 16). The unjustified hopes of the youth for the career advancement changed into the humble attitude of the officials towards the life reality, with the peculiar to the age, the rejection of maximalism and the satisfaction of a fair bit – delicious suppers and quiet evenings in the family circle.

Only once in «Nevskiy Prospect» it is mentioned about the officials of the Vth-IVth grades – a state advisor and a truestate advisor, who have served «this rank for forty years of work» and belonged to the middle class of the society (Gogol, 1990, p. 30). In general, there are very few higher-ranking officials, depicted in literature, while the image of a petty official has become the most favourable for the literary plots.

The brief notes on bureaucracy in the context of Nevskiy Prospect life during the day allow us to get acquainted with many moments of the general urban landscape, extrapolated to the life of a particular stratum. Behind the worthy artistic depictions of the grand style of the era are the real everyday autobiographical observations, which we consider to be a historical source for the metamorphoses of the Empire, which developed on the basis of the conservative monarchy.

Therefore, in the above-mentioned stories, M. Hohol wrote about the time, synchronous with his own life. At that time everyone, who wanted to have a high rank, had to climb the career ladder, earning the service status, regalia and honor in the name of the country. This path was different and depended primarily on the origin, the connections with the «significant person» (according to M. Hohol), education, a personal experience and diligence in the field of work. When the poor and without origin person had to start from zero, hoping for high ranks, it was an in vain affair, though purely theoretically this could happen (Bogdanov, 2011, p. 103). But there were those few, who «have been blessed with the special title of bureaucrats by an enviable fate» (Gogol, 1990, p. 13). It is also important to realize that for many members of the lower classes, a rapid promotion remained an unfulfilled mission, leading to humility and «expulsion» of such thoughts from the head, satisfaction with small opportunities and, consequently, the creation of small needs. However, the researchers note that during the first half of the XIXth century there was a noticeable recession from many conventions and approaches, inherent in the formation of the administrative apparatus in the previous time. The officials generally began to belong to the privileged noble stratum, since any class rank up till 1845 provided a personal nobility, and from the VIIIth grade – an ancestral nobility. The rank acquisition ran through the tenure of office. The officials of the 1st class office (the children of hereditary nobles) received a class rank in 2 years, the 2nd class (the children of personal nobles, merchants of the first guild, clergy) – in 4 years, the 3rd class (the children of «servants», merchants of the second, third guilds) – in 5 years, the IV class (the children of the locals and the people, who left the tax stratum) – in 12 years (Bogdanov, 2011, p. 104). The lowest rank, mentioned by M. Hohol in «Nevskiy Prospect», there was a collegial registrar, which was equal to the army rank of ensign. It was possible to become a collegial registrar only after passing the exam according to the programme content at county school. Like other ranks, it guaranteed protection against a corporal punishment and a direct address in the form of «your nobility» (Bogdanov, 2011, p. 105). In general, to all officials from the XIVth to IXth grades, i.e., starting with a collegial registrar and a titular advisor, this is exactly how it was necessary to address (Stepanov, 2004).

For lower-middle-class students, the collegial registrar's service was prolonged, depending on education, for up to three years, and for the descendants of wealthy parents, this post remained a fleeting episode (Bogdanov, 2011, p. 105). Three years in the status of a collegiate registrar allowed to rise on one stage and to obtain the rank of the provincial secretary, who corresponded

to an army lieutenant. There was no high opinion on this rank in the society, and it was possible to obtain it even by a person of an unprivileged origin. The public opinion on the provincial secretary is marked by the scornful tone of the storyteller. No wonder M. Hohol, commenting on the collegiate registrar, the provincial secretary in «Nevskiy Prospect», remarks on their young age, trying to emphasize additionally the irrespectable status. According to Russian researcher V. Bogdanov, for a person, who originated from a priest's family, even without education, it was possible to become a provincial secretary in seven years of service, and to the one, who had education – in three years (Bogdanov, 2011, p. 106). In order to change the rank of the XIIth grade to the Xth grade, it took three years of service. The rank of a collegiate secretary was equal to that of an army staff-captain, and it was possible to achieve it only for graduates. However, it was the collegiate secretary, the real career as a clerk began (Bogdanov, 2011, p. 106).

The transition from a collegiate secretary to a titular advisor of the IXth grade (the highest among the lower ones) also took place in three years and corresponded to an army captain. The word «titular» meant nominal, that is, invalid (Shepelev, 1991, p. 132) and indicated the non-independent activity of the advisor, a kind of candidacy. He occupied an intermediate vacancy – no longer a secretary, but not yet a full-fledged, autonomously acting advisor. In Hohol times, the titular advisors occupied the vacancies of a senior assistant chief of staff in the ministries departments, the senior assistant secretaries, the recorders, the registrars, the translators in the senate, the bailiffs, the postmaster assistants, the county treasurers, the accountants, etc. In provincial institutions, titular advisers could apply for the positions that provided for some independent activity. However, undoubtedly, every employee was responsible for his actions before a colleague of the highest rank, obeyed him and guided by the bureaucratic attitudes, taking care of the state interests and the official corporation. The functional powers of each institution were also clearly defined and regulated by the laws and the regulations. The official's service subjected not only to the job descriptions, but also to the authority of the specific managerial level office.

The graduates from higher education institutions or those, who had given the decades of life and received the appropriate years of service, were eligible to serve as a titular advisor. After the Decree of August 6, 1809 «On the rules of production in the ranks of civil service and about the tests in the sciences for production in college assessors and statutory advisers» the availability of education for the titular advisor became an obligatory condition (Voropanov, 2013).

Although, it should be noted, it was always possible to occupy the vacancy of a titular advisor not according to the rules, but for special services. By 1845, the rank of the IXth grade was the last before the one, which gave the right to a noble dignity. Since 1856, this limit was raised up to the IVth grade – a true statutory advisor. Overcoming it, proved to be impossible for the majority of those, who wanted to occupy this rank. This led to the appearance of the image of «an eternal titular adviser», derisively called then «titular», «shtulyar» (Bogdanov, 2011, p. 108). St. Petersburg was «flooded» with lonely, poor titular advisers, and Nevskiy Prospect – with green viceroys. O. Darhomyzhsky's romance, written on the poem by P. Weinberg, in 1859 ran: «He was a titular advisor, she was a daughter of a general; he timidly confessed in love, she drove him away», gained an enormous popularity in the urban environment of the XIXth century and not only because of the theme of the mesal alliance, but also through the reflection of the recognizable realities of the bureaucratic world (Zayonchkovskiy, 1978, p. 71). The image of the titular adviser is most clearly depicted by M. Hohol in his works: «The Overcoat» and «The Notes of the Crazy». This fact obliges us to dwell on these works in detail.

The plot of the well-known M. Hohol's «The Overcoat» is about the life of a forty-year-old «titular», «a little man» – Akakiy Akakiyovych Bashmachkin, who served in the N ministerial

department (Gogol, 1990, p. 137). This official «cannot be said to be very remarkable, of allow stature, somewhat rippled, somewhat reddish, somewhat even blind in appearance, with a small bald spot on his forehead, with wrinkles on both sides of his cheeks and complexion, which is called hemorrhoid», and as for the rank he was «what is called the eternal titular adviser, at whom, as we know, various writers joked, who have a laudable custom to suppress those, who cannot bite» (Gogol, 1990, p. 137). M. Hohol casually pauses on the origin, pointing, among other things, to the mother's nepotism with the chief of staff in the Senate, who apparently promoted A. Bashmachkin's service. A detailed description of the appearance and line age of his father, grandfather, and even brother-in-law, who had one pair of shoes all year round, changing only a couple of times a year of the sole, the author probably wants to emphasize the insignificance of the image in a public opinion. As hot supplement of the moment of birth, when Akashi made one grimaced, allegedly «anticipating that there will be a titular advisor» (Gogol, 1990, p. 138), emphasizes the tragedy and fatality of a predetermined fate.

From the first pages of the novel, M. Hohol forms an idea of the titular advisor service content. Guided by the diminishing importance of A. Bashmachkin by a deliberate avoiding the story of his adulthood, the author resorted to describing his service activity in a kind of «a solitary cell», where there were many people and no one, who showed respect and interest for him. «Akakiy Akakiyovych is depicted as a doomed marginal, one of the people from the unknown times, because no one remembered how he was enlisted, and the time stopped because he was always «seen in one place, in the same position, in that of the same post, by the same official for writing, so that they later made sure that he was, apparently, born in the world already quite ready, in a uniform and with a bald head on his head» (Gogol, 1990, p. 138). The complete disregard for A. Bashmachkin's presence can be seen by the author's note that even the guards never got out of their seats when he passed them, did not look at him and «did not show [...] any respect» (Gogol, 1990, p. 138). Attractive was the power of those, who dominated him, also showed the irrepect for the Bashmachkin: «the bosses treated him somehow coldly despotic», and «the young officials laughed and grinned at him, as much as the clerical wit allowed; they told different stories compiled about him; about his mistress, a seventy-year-old woman; they said that she was beating him; asked when their wedding would be; they rolled pieces of paper on his head, calling it snow» (Gogol, 1990, pp. 138–139). A sad phrase of Akakiy Akakiyovych himself to all the offences sounds many times: «Leave me, why do you offend me?» (Gogol, 1990, p. 139). The harried titular advisor is unable to become familiar with his colleagues, and the famous phrase «how much in a human is inhuman» characterizes the complex psychological atmosphere (Gogol, 1990, p. 140).

His job responsibilities consisted in rewriting the documents. The titular adviser was not fed up with the simple role of a scribe as it was unnecessary to occupy the ranks. On the contrary, he loved his work, «lived in his rank», «served zealously», «served with love» (Gogol, 1990, p. 139). Rewriting the documents in an equal handwriting was a kind of therapy against the oppression and the evils of life, for in this he saw the opportunity to escape to another «diverse and pleasant world» (Gogol, 1990, p. 139). Akakiy's Akakiyovych insightful miniature description of the daily exercises as the titular advisor skillfully emphasizes the official's attitude to the duties: «The pleasure was expressed in the face of his; some letters were his favourites, when he wrote them he changed: he laughed, and winked, and helped by his lips, so that in his face, it seemed, it was possible to read every letter that brought his feather-pen» (Gogol, 1990, p. 139). The author's reflection is amplified by the conclusion that if, in accordance with his dedication, the awards were awarded, then A. Bashmachkin could not have served as a statutory advisor, but «not in a

buttonhole» and «a hemorrhoid in the loin» (Gogol, 1990, p. 139). According to the the department director's will, he was offered to try himself as a compiler of the documents. However, Akakiy Akakiyovych was unable to «change the main title of the document [...], some verbs from the first person to the third [...]. Since he was left to rewrite the documents forever» (Gogol, 1990, p. 139). Rewriting remained the only «science» of his life.

He spent his free time the same way: rewriting the documents, when he deliberately took home the work. Almost ceremonially after dinner, A. Bashmachkin «took out a jar of ink and rewrote the papers, which he brought home» (Gogol, 1990, p. 140). However, not the content and «not the beauty of the syllable» evoked the special feelings in him, but the evidence of the respect for the rank, the addressee, an important or new person featured in the document. After several hours of the evening correspondence, A. Bashmachkin was able to sleep with the sole thought: «Will the God send to rewrite tomorrow?» (Gogol, 1990, p. 141). The limitation of a human interests is emphasized by Akakiy's Akakiyovych renunciation from all the usual carnal pleasures of the «bureaucratic circle» – walking along Nevskiy Prospect, visiting the theatre, the evening conversations with «his brother» or with pretty ladies (Gogol, 1990, p. 141). The humble diminution of the needs additionally expresses the sole sense of life, the system of values – the service to the department, rewriting.

A. Bashmachkin's measured life was destroyed by a humble dream of the necessary – a new overcoat, which is absolutely necessary for St. Petersburg's northern frosts (Gogol, 1990, p. 141). The overcoat became the meaning of his existence, the embodiment of the attributes of power, wealth, a social status (Karimova, 2011, p. 5). In six months the dream was destined to come true owing to incredibly hard savings, a moral abuse and even starvation in order to raise the amount needed to order a new overcoat at the tailor's. The appearance of Akakiy Akakiyovych at service in a new outerwear was the culminating event of life, «exactly the biggest festive holiday» (Gogol, 1990, p. 154). For the first time and finally he was noticed by the colleagues, who suggested even organizing a party at their own expense to commemorate the event. For a moment, A. Bashmachkin felt he was the master of the situation and a «significant person». However, the solemn completion of «mingling in the society» did not happen, because on the same evening he was beaten by street thieves and stripped of his brand new overcoat. It was the beginning of the end. The efforts of the abused person, who asks a «significant person» in the general's rank for protection, who «can promote the case», (Gogol, 1990, p. 154), who asks a quarterly or investigator to help to find the abusers and the overcoat were unsuccessful. The finale of this story is notorious – not accepting the loss, Akakiy Akakiyovych, fell ill and died prematurely. Though, the deeply religious M. Hohol concludes the story with the appearance of a ghost, allegedly reincarnated A. Bashmachkin by F. Kafka, who pulled out of the passerby overcoats and calmed down only when he removed his clothes from the «significant person».

The disease diagnosis of «an eternal» title counselor – a lonely life in need, the black and white weekdays, a cruel reality, an unbearable burden to meet the expectations of the environment, the hidden desires, the unfulfilled dreams, the arrogance of unfriendly neighbors, a clown service in the department. The body inferiority «depicted» by the author at the beginning of the story does not look so spooky as the mental deformation of A. Bashmachkin as a result of buying and loss of the overcoat. The Soviet critics always emphasized the futility of a man's material desires and their malice. However, in our opinion, everything looks simpler. Refusing from many of the joys of life, in order to end his suffering, Akakiy Akakiyovych had to enjoy a moral satisfaction and finally experience the corresponding emotions. Only against the background of dreams of the overcoat did he have the vigorous hopes of arranging his own life, «as if some other person

were present with him, as if he were not alone, and some pleasant girlfriend of life agreed to go along with his life path» (Gogol, 1990, p. 147). Subconsciously, the overcoat is associated with something very desirable, a tool for obtaining the unattainable. The dreams and a sense of being, awakened by imagination, the last hopes for change for the better fell apart.

From the pages of P. Annenkov's memoirs it is known that the a real story became the plot of «The Overcoat», which was told in one society, where M. Hohol was present (Annenkov, 1928, pp. 61–62). It was also about an official, who dreamed of a gun. After acquiring it, he lost it later and died of the sorrow. The participants of the evening party recall that everyone was very pleased with the story, except for M. Hohol, who was frankly upset. For several years, with breaks and rewriting of the individual fragments, the story was created, which came to light in 1842 with the blessing of M. Pohodin, the historian. A realistic portrayal of the reality of the titular adviser was made possible by the author's life experience. The life line of M. Hohol himself seemed to have been broken, when the author suddenly got ill and passed away, leaving after himself as small inheritance. The novel of L. Tolstoy «The Death of Ivan Ilyich», published in 1886, is similar to the novel «The Overcoat». The German philosopher M. Heidegger considered «The Overcoat» to be the harbinger of all existentialism in the XXth century philosophy and literature. We do not know if he was familiar with M. Hohol's work. However, the easily recognizable phrase of Eugene-Melgior the Marquis de Voegue about the life experience of more than one generation of a small and, above all, a lonely person: «We all came out of M. Hohol's Overcoat», – sounds right and announces the emergence of the existential knowledge of being.

The story about another petty St. Petersburg official, a titular adviser, a rewriter of the documents, who «revised and checked the papers», – Oksentiy Ivanovych Popryshchyn, was painted by M. Hohol in «The Notes of the Crazy». However, the story explicitly states that O. Popryshchyn served as the staff chief, which means that he should have been an out-of-court advisor (the VIIIth rank) and should have been addressed to with the phrase «your nobility». However, it is well known from the context that his chief was the out-of-court advisor, who originated from different ranks. This circumstance created the discomfort of communication between a noble-born but impoverished titular adviser O. Popryshchyn and not a noble-born, but with a university diploma, chief. A university diploma, mostly of a law faculty graduate, really became a sign of an educated bureaucracy at the time. The law diploma for an official of such a class was an obligatory condition for an official promotion, though until the XIXth century a practical experience remained the only source of the competence formation. (Mironov, 2000, p. 164).

The novel is complex in the socio-psychological, personal biographical, aesthetic dimensions and causes a lot of discussions from a complete admiration to a complete rejection. The novel is a diary of the main character. Initially, O. Popryshchyn, talking to himself through the notes, talks about the service, and then he begins to communicate with hallucinatory interlocutors – Mudgie, the director's daughter dog, where the main character served in the department. And then, the main character received the letters from the dog with whom she corresponded. In the end, he clearly «realized» himself the King of Spain with a corresponding «set of thoughts», which at the end of the novel lose all meaning and turn into a compendium of the unfinished phrases, drawn from the stream of consciousness of the maniacal ideas.

Oksentiy Ivanovych Popryshchyn, like A. Bashmachkin, is a deeply lonely elderly man. Every day Maura, a house maid cleaned his boots, cooked his meals, led a simple household, and sent him to work. However, unlike Akakiy Akakiyovych, O. Popryshchyn was categorically dissatisfied with the work in the department. The benefits of the department were only in the

«nobility of service» for him, aclerical purity, the mahogany tables and the form of a polite address – «you» (Gogol, 1990, p. 173). The head of the department was of a low opinion concerning the subordinate's virtues, calling him a cash-strapped zero (Gogol, 1990, p. 176). The relations with the head of the department did not develop and he did not hide his negative attitude towards O. Popryshchyn, he sincerely criticized O. Popryshchyn's work and constantly asked: «What is it, brother, in your head always such a jumble? You sometimes rush about like a madman, sometimes you confuse things so much that the devil himself will not make it out, you put down a small letter in the title, you do not put down either a date or a number» (Gogol, 1990, p. 173). With an ironical undertone Oksentiy Ivanovych, explained the head's attitude towards him by one emotion – envy, caused by the fact of a daily staying at the director's office, where he (the head of the department) often repaired the feather pen for «His Excellency» (Gogol, 1990, p. 173). On the deep conviction of the titular advisor, «it is, of course, some clerks and even serf people can write something; but their writing is mostly mechanical: no commas, no full stops, no syllable» (Gogol, 1990, p. 175), only the nobleman can write correctly, and therefore Oksentiy Ivanovych considered the remarks of the head, who was not equal with him in origin, extremely humiliating.

Oksentiy Ivanovych's dreamed service place was the provincial government, the civil or government chambers. The measure of certainty in his correctness was the officials' opportunities, who go far beyond the humble expectations to get rich at the «jew-treasurer's» in advance (Gogol, 1990, p. 173). The formula of happiness is «calculated» by a titular advisor from the service experience of his colleague and «brother» by rank, but, at the provincial government, where «he leaned against the corner wall and wrote» and «a dress-coat on him is ugly, his face caused the desire to spit, but look at what country house he hires [...] a gold-plated porcelain cup and don't bring it to him», but give» a couple of trotters, or yeast, or three hundred rubles». He looks so quiet, he talks [...] delicately [...], and then he will take so much from you that he leaves only one shirt» (Gogol, 1990, p. 173). Therefore, for Oleksiy Ivanovych, the opportunity to take bribes is not only a source of a material wealth, but also an identifier of a successful career as a bureaucrat.

According to B. Myronov, in the history of bureaucracy the bribery is a difficult and controversial topic (Mironov, 2000, p. 166). This is due to the fact that for a long period, up to 1764, the time when the official claim for service was introduced, there was a special system of remuneration, covering different types of payment for services, incl. the bribe to express some honor, a gift, a treat, feeding, other «mechanisms» of expedited record keeping and a favourable resolution of the issues, without the law violations (Pisarkova, 2002). Therefore, the bribery played an important social function, complementing not only the article of the material profits of the officials, but (paradoxically) the lawful performance of the cases. That lasted until the great reforms of the second half of the XIXth century at least. It should be also noted that the possibility of bribery diminished sharply and directly in accordance with the hierarchy of the official's rank, who had a decent payment and was not tempted by any chances to be given a bribe. At the same time, the official salaries of the XIVth – IXth grades officials were low. In particular, the titular advisors received 75 rubles in silver per month (Oklady denezhnye). This fact caused their rather modest living conditions. Thus, M. Hohol's hero A. Bashmachkin, a capital official, had the annual salary of 400 rubles per year, taking into account all his merits (Gogol, 1990, p. 141). Their poverty indicated the following fact – it was unlikely that all Russian officials could be blamed for bribery, and therefore sometimes dreamed of the additional sources of income and the ranks where it was possible.

The desire to get some superiority, to rise above the others, to become an upper class official formed the top in the value hierarchy of O. Popryshchyn. According to Oleksiy Ivanovych, he had

every reason for this. Almost every note contains the official's value traits: «I am the official, I am of a noble origin», «I can't stand a lackey milieu», «I am a nobleman», «I am fond of going to the theatre», «Only a noble man can write correctly». That's why the lifeline had to pass according to the defined strategic positions: «we will be a colonel, and [...] if the God gives the chance, then we will be come something more» (November, 6) (Gogol, 1990, p. 177), «I'd like to become a general: not to get the rank only, no, I'd like to become a general to see them flattering me and doing different things for me» (November,13) (Gogol, 1990, pp. 193, 196), «Why am I a titular advisor and why should I be a titular advisor? Maybe I'm some kind of a count or a general, and I only seem to be a titular adviser? [...] Can't I be granted right now the Governor-General or the Quartermaster, or some?» (December, 3) (Gogol, 1990, p. 196). The delusions of grandeur overcame «myopia» and, finally, «there is a king in Spain. He is found. I am this King» (2000, April, 43) (Gogol, 1990, p. 197). The dates in the notes of the appetite growth concerning the rank, the status indicated not only O. Popryshchyn's autumn-winter mental illness progress, but also of a clear desire to get out of the eternal title advisor «pants» finally.

There are phrases of steadily increasing expression: «Yes, I spit on him [the chief]». The phrases are the signs of Oksentiy Ivanovych's wishes and the irreconcilable conflict, not only with himself but also with his milieu» (November, 6) (Gogol, 1990, p. 177), «I spit on you both [the chief and the department's head]» (November,13) (Gogol, 1990, p. 196), and I spit on all the «clerical bastard staff» (March, 86. Between day and night) (Gogol, 1990, p. 198). Against the background of his career progression, his attitudes toward the colleagues changed dramatically, as well as toward those, whom the titular advisor had recently admired. So, in the initial notes the idol appears to be «the very education», the state official, «not of our brother level» (Gogol, 1990, p. 175) – the head of the department. However, in the last notes, radically contradictory views were expressed in the acutely outspoken and cynical, pretentious phrases. And now the director is just «a cork, a simple cork, and nothing else more» (Gogol, 1990, p. 198). And all the clerical staff, «all the seclerical staff, all these, who shout and try to join the court yard, heralding they are the patriots and etc.», so they «will sell their father and mother for the money, ambitious men, those betrayed the Christ!» (Gogol, 1990, p. 199). A convinced dissatisfaction with things and denying humility in life, confirm O. Popryshchyn's desire for change for the better. The last hope of the career growth by getting married to the department director's daughter, was completely defeated. This fact catalyzed further the disease of Oksentiy Ivanovych. Pretending to be insane, M. Hohol speaks through the hero of the story, exposing the unattractive defects of Russian bureaucratic apparatus, violating the taboo of the ruling officials' morals. Moreover, in proportion to the complication of the disease, the titular advisor consciously perceived the flaws of bureaucracy more clearly, which further creates a sense of phantasmagoria.

Among the confused reflection, caused by O. Popryshchyn's disease, we can «read» his vision of the reasons for his status as an eternal titular advisor and the inability to grow in his career – «there is no wealth, no prosperity – that's the problem» (Gogol, 1990, p. 177), and the orphanage because he grew up without a «bureaucratic father». Deprived of the conditions to become the one he wanted, the unfulfilled desires meant the end of life for O. Popryshchyn – «there is no place on the Earth for him!» (Gogol, 1990, p. 202). From the inconsistency of one's own requests and capabilities, a man dies, and to resolve this contradiction seems to be an incredible affair. As V. Bohdanov notes, the figures of titular advisors-losers are often depicted in Russian literature (Bogdanov, 2011, p. 108). The advisors-losers were the retired bailiff «a scoundrel» and «a goose» Poyarkov in the novel, written by P. Melnykov (Melnikov, 1897, p. 47–48), a literary prototype of A. Bashmachkin – Makar Dyeuvushkin, the middle-aged official, in «The Poor» and

Semen Marmeladov in «The Crime and Punishment», written by F. Dostoyevskiy and the others. The latter considered M. Hohol's novel «The Overcoat» to be brilliant due to a perfect image of the titular advisor (Bogdanov, 2011, p. 108). Let's also agree with colleagues that there are less «grotesque» characters among literary characters, but this is rather an exception.

The mode-of-life scenes increase the effect of the «titular advisor's» image perception. The wardrobe of the titular advisor was not of a fashionable style or an artistic and aesthetic sophistication. His modesty is conveyed in general and in detail. So, Akakiy's Akakiyovych old-fashioned overcoat «was not green but of a reddish-flour color», in some places it was so worn out, that «the cloth [...] had holes and the wadding was worn out too», and the collar of the overcoat, humiliatingly called a home female dress by the colleagues – a cowl, «got less and less each year because it was used for other parts of clothes» (Gogol, 1990, pp. 140, 142). Even the unpretentious and far-fetched trends of Bashmachkin's familiar tailor – Petrovych, make us speak of a dress as a «poor clothing», «the matter is quite rotten» (Gogol, 1990, p. 142). Only before the official's death «there passed a light guest in the image of the overcoat, that made the poor life more alive» (Gogol, 1990, p. 158). The theft of the «light guest» became an insurmountable deep traumatic shock for Akakiy Akakiyovych, undermined his health and a relative mental stability. That was the reason for his death, leaving a modest inheritance – «a bunch of goose feathers, ten white government papers, three pairs of socks, two-three buttons torn from the trousers and [...] a cowl» (Gogol, 1990, p. 158).

The reflections of Bashmachkin, the titular advisor, on the life important size «choice» for him seem rather dramatic and exhausting: «to buy new trousers, to pay the shoe-maker an old debt for making new heads to old calves [...] to order three shirts and two pairs of underwear, which is considered to be impolite to mention here» or to spare this money and order a new overcoat in a remote distance from Nevskiy Prospect, and hence, a cheap atelier studio (Gogol, 1990, p. 146). Therefore, for Akakiy Akakiyovych the choice in favour of clothes renewal was incredibly brave. The miserable life of the XIth grade official forced him to save on everything for almost a year, ousting even very modest «liberties» from an everyday life: «not to drink tea in the evenings, not to light [...] the candles, and if anything is needed to be done, to go to the hostess's room and work at the candle-light; walking along the streets, to step as easily and carefully as possible on stones and slabs, almost on tiptoe, so as not to rub out soles too soon; to give the laundress as rare as possible to wash the laundry, and so as not to have it worn out, every time after coming home, to take it off and put on a cotton coat, very old and spared even by time» (Gogol, 1990, p. 147). The accentuated attitude of A. Bashmachkin to the old things emphasizes how the little man of the new great era of the Russian Empire lived and what precious for the little man was.

A devastating split of personality and the appearance of another titular advisor – Oksenti Ivanovych Popryshchynis very briefly described as if from the words of Fijie dog, but in fact, it was a self-reflection. He appears ugly, an absolute «tortoise in a sack», just like in the overcoat of an old style and a low quality woolen cloth (Gogol, 1990, p. 174) and «hay» instead of hair on the head (Gogol, 1990, p. 191). O. Popryshchyn, like A. Bashmachkin, dreamed of his «overcoat» – «a fashionable dress-coat made by a tailor, and [...] a tie» (Gogol, 1990, p. 177). The personification of the hatred of his life was cut by him his overcoat, and the final denial of the precarious existence a royal suit, «sewn» by his own hands in a murk state (Gogol, 1990, p. 199).

The envy for the life «winners» – the senior ranks, is present in every novel of the cycle, but in «The Overcoat» and «The Notes of the Crazy» it can be identified in almost every small sketch. Therefore, the titular advisor's filthiness increases even more because of the well-being of his superiors. A bohatyr appearance, a golden chain, boots at 30 rubles price, the bookcases, the

«mirrors and porcelain», a general's uniform, trotters, overcoats with a beaver collar, the lanterns, the candles, the card tables, French perfumes, batista handkerchiefs, the coach, the house, the tube, gastronomic items, warmth of the wife and children, the family tenderness and adultery, the subordinates' submissiveness and the opportunity to induce them – these candid M. Hohol instructions for existence of a «parallel world» are presented in the novels on purpose to reveal another dimension of life.

An interesting marker of success was the location of the story characters' dwellings. Indirectly, we learn that most of Oksenti Ivanovych's colleagues lived in the first five-storeyed building of St. Petersburg (Gogol, 1990, p. 175), located in the city center near the Catherine Canal, the so-called the house of I. Zverkov, built in 1827. The house is known for the fact that in 1829 – 1831 M. Hohol also lived there on the fifth floor (Vasiliev, 2015). The titular advisor of a noble origin, O. Popryshchyn, lived in a remote place from Nevskyi Prospect, since he reached it on foot, but we do not find the exact address in the novel. His way to the department ran through Meshchanska, Piddyacha Streets, Lantern or Carpenter's lanes, the so-called «The middle of St. Petersburg's streets and alleys» (Vasiliev, 2015), adjacent to Sinna (Hay) Square. It is possible to determine where Akakiy Akakiyovych lived only through the general remarks, but most likely it was the outskirts of St. Petersburg. It is known that he had to cross five or six streets on his way to the department (Gogol, 1990, p. 141), and the way to a dinner party to the assistant chief of the staff indirectly indicates that he lived «in the best part of the city» so it was not very close to Akakiy Akakiyovych, because the closer Bashmachkin approached his colleague's house, the more alive were the streets, more enlightened and crowded with people. The audience was also correspondent: «the ladies, beautifully dressed, the men with beaver collars, [...], the scorches in crimson velvet hats, with varnished sleds, with bear blankets, [...] carriages with goats», the bright shop windows, the lanterns (Gogol, 1990, p. 150). On the contrary, returning home from the party, a spacious, crowded part of the city gradually retreated and stayed far behind, instead «there stretched the deserted streets, which even [...] were not merry in the afternoon, and even more so in the evening», which later became «even more deserted and more secluded: the lanterns began to flash less often [...] there were wooden houses, the fences; nowhere the only soul; only one snow gleamed in the streets, but sadly blackened low huts with closed shutters» (Gogol, 1990, p. 152). This urban landscape was coming to an end with a description of the outskirts, which was a terrible wasteland (Gogol, 1990, p. 152). Therefore, the residence location of the different classes of officials becomes another clue to the perception of the officials' vision of the metropolitan bureaucracy of the imperial Russia.

In the novels M. Hohol created the worship of the rank particularly successful. The beliefs of the lower ranks in the necessity and importance of the upper classes' constant worship are implemented in their every thought and action, in general, in the model of behaviour. The «superiors» of this world create a shade that houses the collegial registrars, the secretaries, the titular advisors, and other bureaucrats of the elementary classes of «influence». In «The St. Petersburg Tales» one can find a lot of scenes, when due to the unfolded plots and the individual lapidary phrases, there was described the relationship between the chief and his subordinates. Thus, the «significant person», depicted in «The Overcoat» was so imperious that «ten officials, who made up the whole governmental mechanism of the office, were already in fear; saw him from afar, he left the case and waited for standing, while the chief came across the room», but «his ordinary conversation with the lower ones was austere and consisted of almost three phrases:» «How dare you? Do you know who you are talking to? Do you understand, who is in front of you?» (Gogol, 1990, p. 152). It is interesting that in a very different way the general treated his colleagues and at that time he

was «still a man as follows, a very decent man, in many ways not even stupid» (Gogol, 1990, p. 155). The potential grandeur of the «significant person» was amplified by the attraction to the ceremonies, namely: «He made the lower officials meet him on the stairs, when he came into office; that no one dared to appear directly to him, and that everything was in a strict order; the college registrar would report to the provincial secretary, the provincial secretary – to the titular or any other person, and in such a way, the case would come to him», because» so in St. Russia everything is infected with imitation, everyone is teasing and corrupting his superior» (Gogol, 1990, p. 154). Under these sketches there lies another reforming detail of a bureaucratic life – the relations transition between the ranks from the personal plane to the formal and rational one (Gogol, 1990, p. 167).

A similar scene is described in «TheNotes of the Crazy» when Oksentiy Ivanovych, during his last visit to the department, critically contemplates the bow of the chief to the waist before the director and the fuss of «office cladding» before him (Gogol, 1990, p. 198). Even metaphysical looks of O. Popryshchyn's desire, being already in a very crazy state, of giving up any worship because «no signs of subduing are needed!» (Gogol, 1990, p. 198). And, conversely, the usual traditional thing is the wish of the titular advisor in a common sense, the newly appointed chief of a small office, to shield himself from his subordinates, to have a separate room for himself and to place the chaplains with red collars at the door to emphasize the ceremony of visiting the office, where «an ordinary desk could hardly be placed» (Gogol, 1990, p. 154). Another indirect scene is about the attitude to the senior ranks, related to the donation for Bashmachkin, in order to compensate the damage, caused by the theft of a new overcoat. The collection of «a little sum of money» was explained by the recent donations made by the office to have the director's portrait made and «some book, suggested by the chief of the department, who was a friend of the writer» (Gogol, 1990, p. 154). The director's portrait and the book, written by the director's friend, but an unknown author, became more important for Akakiy's Akakiyovych colleagues than his suffering.

Small gastronomic sketches of the meals, which also depended on the salary, distinguish the way of the titular advisor's life because «everything depended on the amount of the received salary and as well as one's own wish» (Gogol, 1990, p. 140). Therefore, in Akakiy Akakiyovych's dinner table was extremely monotonous and consisted of the soup with sauerkraut, a piece of beef and onions, and he ate it all «with flies and with all that the God sent at that time», and drinking tea after eating (Gogol, 1990, p. 140). His colleague of the highest rank – the assistant clerk, had a better dinner – a mixed salad, cold veal, paste, pastry, champagne (Gogol, 1990, p. 151). The department's director had a different meal. Quite an ordinary thing on his table there were different kinds of meat, including wildfowl, the capers and herbs sauces, the cereals, a wide range of bread in abundance, vegetable dishes, in addition exotic vegetables, such as artichokes, tea, coffee with cream, etc.(Gogol, 1990, pp. 184–185). Unlike the widespread gastronomic canvases in M. Hohol's works, «The St. Petersburg Tales» are not typical of it. However, even the small and insignificant notes about the possibilities of the novel characters become indicative and increasingly «draw» the reader into the era and the mode of life of the official «titulyaska».

The family institute is depicted in a quite interesting way. At the time of writing M. Hohol's life experience is not burdened with the family ties or deep family responsibilities. With no house of his own and having other social oppression, M. Hohol couldn't even think of making a family. It is the very circumstance that determines the marriage horizon of his main literary characters. They are all unmarried, though they are surrounded by many family people, happy and unhappy couples. A mercenary marriage, depicted in the novel, is a noticeable motive for the relations of the bureaucracy with the opposite sex. Oksentiy Ivanovych looked at the department director's

daughter, dreamed of getting into her boudoir, where there was «paradise on earth», but only until he was a titular advisor. When fantasies «made» him a general, getting married for him seemed to be superfluous, because the supremacy of the title over the director promised the greater pleasure (Gogol, 1990, p. 191). But Akakiy Akakiyovych, because of the doom to be eternally in the rank of atitular advisor and a desperate hopelessness of his own existence, just in the new overcoat thought about various French things and the relations with womanhood (Gogol, 1990, p. 150). However, the novels are devoid of details of officials' marriage plans, with no apparent desire to pursue the dreams, which may further testify to the author's avoidance of the topic. Although there is a lot of well-known speculation about M. Hohol's attitude towards women, let's leave it to the experts. We will note another important concept related to the marriage and written out by the storyteller – the use of family, family ties, patronage to promote their own children. Therefore, the son of a «significant person» served in the office (Gogol, 1990, p. 160).

The integrity of the official's image is also complemented by the notes on the attitudes towards the duties performance. If Akakiy Akakiyovych is perceived by the reader as a model copywriter who «made no mistake in writing» (Gogol, 1990, p. 139) and an impeccable employee, who only once did not come to the department because of the loss of his overcoat, and then death, then Oksentiy Ivanovych allowed himself not to go to the service for three weeks, because «hell with him [...] I will not rewrite your nasty papers» and somehow for the sake of «joking went to the department» (Gogol, 1990, p. 198). At the same time the complete ignorance of the authorities' anger clearly illustrated the fact that in reality a clear system of disciplinary or administrative punishment, penalties in such cases did not exist and for the most part in Russia the right of condemnation was used. Even at the end of the XIXth century, after the judiciary and other reforms in the legal system, lawyers often noted the helplessness of the administration concerning the undisciplined officials, considering the situation a topical task of the administrative justice (Korkunov, 1909, pp. 402–403).

The «Caucasus» collegiate assessor was the hero of M. Hohol's novel «The Nose», who for a greater significance was called exclusively by a military rank, – major Kovalyev (Gogol, 1990, p. 54). The collegiate assessor belonged to the VIIIth grade, which the nobles acquired after 4 years, and the others – owing to 12 years of a perfect service. The attractiveness of the grade consisted in the following: until 1845 it guaranteed the right to receive an ancestral nobility. After the Decree of August 6, 1809, the applicants for the rank were required to have a higher education, or to pass the appropriate exam. The note that Kovalyev was a Caucasian collegiate assessor needs explanation. After Georgia's annexation to Russia, the government, attempting to create the Romanov administrative unit in the Caucasus, actively engaged young officials to serve in the region, promising them the lenient requirements and a short term of a collegiate assessor rank, and, accordingly, a noble title with a small noble estate (Bogdanov, 2011, p. 109). M. Hohol's remark that «the college assessors, who receive this title with the help of the academic certificates cannot be compared to those [...] that were made in the Caucasus» (Gogol, 1990, p. 54), – is quite fair. In the notes to the text, the author remarks that the rank of the assessor «could be obtained much easier thanks to the incredible abuses of the administration» (Gogol, 1990, p. 54). So, Kovalyev arrived in the capital in order to get a high-ranking service of a worthy collegiate assessor – «the vice-governor, or – executive in any prominent department» (Gogol, 1990, p. 54).

The collegiate assessor looked very different in an everyday life and in solving important matters for himself. He walked along Nevskiy Prospect every day; visited confectioneries, hair dressing salons, theaters; in clothing he liked white starched collars and lace shirts; wearing

many seals of «cornelian, and with coats of arms, and those on which it was carved: Wednesday, Thursday, Monday and so on» (Gogol, 1990, p. 54). And the only thing from the outside that indicated a hasty appointment, except at a young age, there were the sideburns that did not correspond to the status and showed origin, because they were such, «what can still be seen in provincial and county land surveyors, architects and regimental doctors, also senders of different police duties and generally all those men, who have full, rosy cheeks and play boston very well» (Gogol, 1990, p. 55).

Unlike the images of titular advisers depicted by M. Hohol, the major's apartment was located there, where «everyone will show» – on Sadova Street (Gogol, 1990, p. 54), that begins at Nevskiy Prospect. Having a much better material fortune than a titular advisor, the college assessor was already more free to think about the marital relations and was not even against making love to a lady for whom a good dowry was given and who had «two hundred thousand capital» (Gogol, 1990, p. 55).

Kovalyov bowed to those from the higher world as well. Knowing, for example, a court-yard advisor, he always called him a lieutenant colonel. In the small phrase of M. Hohol, that the major did it with the emphasized kindness to make a characteristic desire to do a good deed to the senior rank, magnifying publicly (Gogol, 1990, p. 58).

The external attributes for Kovalyev were extremely important, because thanks to them, the assessor was going to get a position. Therefore, when the anguish occurred and he lost an important «detail» of his face – his nose, there were no limits to suffering until he «it was found» on the face, because «without a nose a man – a bird is not a bird, a citizen is not a citizen» (Gogol, 1990, p. 63). However, unlike Akakiy Akakiyovych, having losses, Kovalyev wasn't at a loss, he didn't fall into the psychologically exhausting emotion. The plot is with a nose, according to the experts, gleaned from folklore, which is rich in such stories. M. Hohol used this plot to dress the folklore heights in in new literary form.

Between the two absurdly satirical events, the main plot unfolds – the nose is not only a part of the face, but at the same time a noble of a high rank, since «he was in a uniform, sewn with gold, with a large standing collar; he had suede pants; the sword at the side», and «on the hat with the plume it could be concluded that he was considered in the rank of a statistic advisor» (Gogol, 1990, p. 55). The rank of state advisor (the Vth grade) was considered very honorable and reached only by persons of a noble origin. Separated from the face, the nose had an independent life and for three ranks surpassed its ruler, starting to serve «on the scientist part» (Gogol, 1990, p. 57). For the hero of the novel, the rank of a Caucasian collegiate assessor was the peak of opportunity. But his nose, with his major's patronage, was able to fly higher.

The author emotionally describes Kovalyev's vagaries related to the search of the nose – visiting a newspaper expedition and a private bailiff. Not so ambitious as in «The Overcoat» there appear «piety departments», but their employees are depicted invariably great lovers of gifts. The bribe is a prerequisite for the successful consideration of any issue in the office of the bureau and this belief dominated in the mind of the petitioner. Therefore, for example, the whole front room in the house of the bailiff is filled with sugar heads, «which were brought by the merchants because of friendship» and in general, «the private was a great encourager of all arts and manufactures, but he preferred the state appropriation to everything» (Gogol, 1990, p. 62), and the very hero occurred in the situations when «the hand began to pocket» (Gogol, 1990, p. 61).

There is quite interesting Kovalyev's movement as soon as the nose is returned. It turns out that he was not limited to the daily route: the places of residence and the services. Chronologically, it looked like this: a pastry shop, where a cup of chocolate was usually served; a hairdresser, where

the sideburns were carefully aligned; the department, where he sought to obtain a lieutenant-governor or an executive position; the house of an authoritative and influential collegiate assessor and promising, bright Nevskiy Prospect. The thirst for power moved the major along this route of «consuming» life experiences. Kovalyev worried over his nose, first of all, to be able to realize successfully the benefits of the rank and file the dream.

Therefore, the image of the collegiate assessor is written in the best M. Hohol's literary tradition and corresponds to the rejection of the stereotypical perception of the bureaucrat as a failure with poor prospects. On the contrary, the average official was not only an educated fashionable man, but he had a firm conviction that it was advisable to make a career and a fairly realistic optimistic perspectives.

The Conclusions. According to M. Hohol's contemporaries, in the above-mentioned novels many interesting things are engraved for a keen inquisitive mind. The image of the official can be complemented endlessly by the observations and the conclusions. But let us dwell on the most important. The main hero of «The St. Petersburg's Tales» by Mykola Hohol is a small middle-aged city official, in particular a titular advisor, who served in the ministerial department. The average bureaucrat of the lower classes was engaged in copying, registering documents, other clerical current practices, and was largely free-hired, decent, competent in his duties with minimal wages, a non-family person, and many years of experience, a person, who did not take bribes and lived in a rented room with the owner of the apartment. During the reign of Alexander I, and especially his brother Nicholas, a generation of educated bureaucracy was formed, although the traditions of giving orders for special merit, a social origin or property were maintained. The circumstances of entry into office are rather subtle, and this further reflects the processes of becoming a new format employee. The professionalization of the bureaucracy, thanks to a special education, the separation of a civilian service from the military one, changed the image of the typical bureaucrat.

The collective portrait of the titular advisor destroys the stereotypes of perception in the society of the «ash tribe» (by M. Hohol). The author knew about the negative attitude towards the bureaucratic people of this category and the corresponding literary image, but he tried to break free from the stamps and to sympathize with his heroes, not only worrying because of their deep loneliness and the smallness of life's pleasures, but also cementing the understanding of the smooth work importance of a small «wheel» of bureaucracy. Improvements at various levels of the government organization, the governing mechanism, the quantitative growth of the officials, together with the mental changes, caused by the increased requirements for professional fitness, whose activities were the subject only to the laws, interests of the state and the bureaucratic corporation, contributed to the development of the rule of law and the imperial state.

However, a collegiate assessor appears quite different in «The St. Petersburg Tales». A causally motivated, capable, young person, who is confident in himself, lives in an alternative scenario, and when he falls into the «primitive class», he ambitiously dreams of more. The specific bureaucratic subculture obliged him to remain viable in all situations and to achieve continually what he desired.

For M. Hohol, his characters are, first and foremost, the people and the destinies. The archetypal image of inevitability is elaborated through the streets of St. Petersburg, the houses, the uniforms, the sideburns, the office, which unfold interestingly and multifaceted. A new, competent and resourceful generation of promising young people, taking up the field of service, is ready to act in the name of the state, the power, the influence and the social benefits. At the same time, in the context of autobiography, we have images of characters, who do not manage their own lives but live in the interests of the service. The decades of activity in the ranks sparked a fading

of private interests, the dreams receded and became almost unreal for the bureaucrats. But what maybe something better for them than Nevskiy Prospect, which always acts now, self-sufficiently and mysteriously, embodies the power of the state and carries out the articulation of the world, where «everyone is either the officials or the merchants or the Germans masters?»...

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