

## METHODS AND NARRATIVE STYLE OF VALENTIN PIKUL

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### ABSTRACT

The article gives a brief overview of Pikul's works, his style, methods of describing events, historical figures and just people of the past time, shows the attitude of historians and critics of novels and stories of the writer.

**Keywords:** history, brutality, inaccuracy, reality, novel, personality, image.

Pikul during his creative life created about thirty novels and novellas, and that's not counting the numerous historical miniatures - small stories about historical figures and events of the past.

In the early 1960s Pikul moved to Riga, and it was here that he created his most famous works, such as "Requiem for the PQ-17 Caravan", "Moonsund", "Word and Deed", "Pen and Sword" and others.

Pikul's style was sharply different from the style of classic historical novels of the Soviet period. In his works he put his soul, drawing extremely volumetric images of the characters, showing their emotions and experiences, colorfully described the life of the time. But often Pikul's main characters were the most real historical figures.

Pikul in his works acts as an emotional storyteller who openly sympathizes with some personalities and is completely ruthless to others.

Such a method of narration alarmed the writer's colleagues, aroused indignation among professional historians and attracted the close attention of the authorities of the time, who saw in Pikul's irreverence for Empress Elizaveta Petrovna and Grigory Potemkin some hidden hints of modernity. That is why the real success to Pikul came during perestroika, when it became fashionable to allow everything and everyone.

Over time, the writer's books became more and more polarized, and the criticism of professional historians became harsher. Fans of Pikulia even today accept such criticism with indignation, arguing that the author before the creation of each book worked a lot with the sources. Opponents object, arguing that Pikul did not spend a single day in the archives, preferring to work with memoirs of participants of the events or with the books of those writers who had already created works with a similar theme.

Connoisseurs of fleet history note that Pikul, despite his own maritime past, sometimes very freely describes naval battles, gives the wrong characteristics of the ships, and portraits of some naval commanders do not coincide with reality.

In fact, Pikul really has a lot of inaccuracies, but the main complaint is still not about them, but about the historical portraits of the personalities he described. In his unfinished novel "Barbarossa" Valentin Pikul gave extremely derogatory characteristics of the entire Soviet leadership during the Great Patriotic War, almost without hesitation in expressions.

Professional historians point out that in his story the writer often wove events that never really happened and appear only as rumors and historical anecdotes. Pikul, on the other hand, presented it as an immutable truth.

"The Word and the Deed" develops the theme of I. I. Lazhechnikov's *The Ice House* (1835), one of Russia's first historical novels, in which the reign of Anna Ioannovna is presented as an era of confrontation between Russian patriots and "Germans". Written in typical Pikulian manner (processing the little-known at the time facts and piquant historical anecdotes), the novel in general reflects the theory that the "dominance of foreigners" in Russia during the reign of Anna Ioannovna was definitely negative for Russia. The Duke Biron and the vice-chancellor Ostermann, who headed the Russian government at the time, are portrayed in a negative light, while their opponent, Artemy Volynsky, is presented as a "progressive Russian man" and the leader of the "resistance" to Biron and Ostermann. In reality, the figure of Volynsky is much more contradictory. However, Pikul does not conceal Volynsky's vices and shortcomings, showing his propensity for bribery and embezzlement, but all this pales before the fact that he dared to challenge Biron, Ostermann, and other Germans in power.

"Unclean Power" focuses on the last years of the Russian monarchy and Grigory Rasputin's influence on the fall of the Russian Empire. The writer's view would hardly have surprised contemporaries of the last Russian emperor, but at a time when Nicholas Alexandrovich Romanov is commonly credited with some benefactors, some see the book as blasphemy.

As a result, "Unclean Power" was first published in its entirety only in 1989.

Both admirers and critics of Valentin Pikul make the same mistake trying to evaluate him as a historian. Pikul is not a historian, he is a creator of historical novels. He was once called "Russian Dumas," and this is a very accurate characterization. After all, the France created by Alexandre Dumas was radically different from the real France. Anyone who grew up with *The Three Musketeers*, it is difficult to accept the idea that Richelieu, Anne of Austria, Buckingham in reality were quite different from how they are described by Dumas. But the writer's genius was stronger than the historical truth.

It is almost the same situation with Pikul's works. His historical narrative - the author's view of the era, not claiming to be absolutely objective. The magic of Pikul's

works led many to believe that everything he told - the truth from beginning to end. When it turned out not to be so, there came disappointment.

Valentin Pikul's great merit is that he managed to arouse genuine interest in history among millions of readers.

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