

Student's road to history: new concept of teaching the course

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Abstract. This article is devoted to the new concept of teaching the History course developed by the team of authors from Financial University. The course is subdivided into three interrelated structural sections. The course sections are based on the principle of analysis of major points of the Russian civilization historical development in the context of world history. Students are introduced to the principles of working with historical documents, statistic data, as well as other materials providing correct interpretation of focal points of historical process. The authors believe that such arrangement of the course would allow orienting the students' cognition at development of consistent point of view on their place in history. By means of teaching history in this way, several tasks are solved at once. Firstly, the students eagerly search for their place in the world, that is, two major functions of historical cognition are combined: educational function and self-identification function. Secondly, it is possible to remain in the preset frames of historical education adopted in modern Russian universities. Thirdly, the teaching of history is harmonically embodied into the structure of humanitarian education on the basis of interdisciplinary historical and philosophical approach. Teaching of the History course should eliminate serious negative issues of Russian historical cognition.

Keywords: history, waves and cycles of history, historical cognition, humanitarian education.

1 Introduction

Presentation of history and its teaching in the media, methodological discordance, the lack of common estimation criteria of disputable historical events, dilution of its subject by implementation of alien analytical methods: all this reflects the transitional state of contemporary historical consciousness of Russian society [1]. There is a growing demand for history in its new, relevant sense. At the same time, the level of population education is substituted with ability to interact with virtual reality. The demand to revise the paradigms of knowledge of historical processes is on the agenda [2].

An urgent task of teaching is the development of coordinated estimation criteria of contradictory historical phenomena in order to apply them in learning process [3]. Another task of historical education is fostering of civic consciousness and patriotism among young

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students. The third task is related with overriding harmful imitation of alien cultural codes, cutting off false theories, separation of history and policy [4].

2 Methods

Formation of a new approach to teaching of History course had definite purposes. One of them was to trace changes of phases of historical development and to determine internal regularity of trend of the Russian history. With this aim, it was required to show specificity of similar phases in different historical epochs, order of their alternation, to detect accelerators and brakes of development, to estimate the pattern of progress, to explain the change of development rates at various historical cycles. All this obeyed to the main purpose: cognition of human in history through analysis of forms of self-organization and methods of self-consciousness [5].

In this way the ability was gained to implement an interdisciplinary approach, concentrating on analysis of state of public self-consciousness [6]. Thus, the traditional components of historical analysis were subject to detection of regularities of evolution of the Russian social environment. A specific feature of the Russian history was manifested in multivariate development of Russia, composed of ethnic, confessional, and other differences in interrelations of constituent folks.

Each of the course topics oriented the students at analysis of problematic areas, which were the meaning centers of the study of the past. They preset conditions for formation of node points in students' cognition of history and their place in it. Problematic areas were fraught with alternative outcomes of events. Therefore, it was required to demonstrate not only implemented opportunities but also existing alternative variants. A new steady type of community life was formed at the outlet from problematic area.

3 Results

Arrangement of the course by highlighting several problematic areas for analysis has allowed using wave paradigm of historical process, which provides the required visualization to the analyzed material [7]. Understanding of history is based on the concept of cyclic alternation and imposition of waves of development having various amplitudes. In human history, it is possible to highlight mega-, big, medium, and small waves. Mega-waves of history with the amplitude from millions to several tens of thousands of years reflect evolution of humanity through its involvement into planetary, geoclimatic cycles [8]. Big waves with the amplitude of several thousands of years form the most important fundamental constants of way of life and thinking of peoples [9]. Analysis of these waves is based on the methodology of formation analysis. Oscillations of world history are determined by changes of humanity life under the influence of dynamics of property forms on the basis of dominating type of industrial relations [10].

The formation component reflects the process in stages of progressive vertical, which are imposed onto horizontal plane of specific human history. The emerging reality reflects how the stage wave overcomes obstacles, which are stipulated by existing being of specific place, country or region. Peculiar historical interference determines the areas of the higher stress with regard to certain type of development, forms center and peripheries. Stage transitions are conjugated with massive migrations, epidemics, wars, which change historical space for a new wave of development [11].

Inside these cycles it is possible to observe alternation of medium waves with the amplitude of several hundreds of years. They correspond to the phases of integration and disintegration of cultural and historical space. Integration refers to the process of internal

consolidation of national historical space, disintegration – to destruction of its integrity. Herewith, destruction characterizes the depth of destruction of social sphere, deformation refers to its shape. The issue of disintegration irreversibility is analyzed through the concepts of decomposition and crisis.

The ascending stage of cycle reflects the trend of consolidation of cultural and historical space, unification of people, cultures, formation of autocracy and sovereignty. Descending routes of cycle reveal the disintegration of community integrity, destruction of public political relations, increase in public conflicts, weakening of governmental power and controversy of social management [12]. Transitions between these cycle phases are described by small waves of destruction and stabilization with the amplitude of tens of years.

Analysis of small waves is based on synergistic theory of social bifurcations. The areas of history between descending and ascending progress are characterized by properties of stabilizer, and the phase transitions from ascending to descending progress are characterized by the properties of destructor. Herewith, the stabilizers and destructors are activated well ahead of arriving of society to descending and ascending points of historical extreme points. These segments of wave oscillation act as catalyzers of progress to state peaks [13].

Imposition of waves of various magnitude creates complicated pattern of dynamics of world history. However, only in this way it is possible to realize unique place of each community in human history. The new interpretation of History course is based on the concept of ascending/descending motion of waves of the past, as well as accompanying areas of destruction and stabilization of historical processes. The waves are combined into civilizational cycles, the integrals of which are the constants of historical development: steady methods of optimum life support of people [14].

In order to obtain comprehensive and volumetric historical analysis, it is required to preset 3D coordinates in the frames of highlighted epoch: global historical context – width; internal national trend of integration/disintegration – height; state of public environment – depth. In this field the area of root interests of people, social groups, and overall society is analyzed. The maturity of understanding as well as ability to pursue these interests and to comprehend the results of their implementation are evaluated. The 3D space of the past should be perceived, this perception should be multidimensional: one part should be formed by contemporaries of the events, another part – by researchers of various generations.

In the frames of the course, the problem is solved to bring history closer to students, to create situation of personal involvement into historical process. Hence, it is necessary not only to stimulate learning the original sources by students but also to form the students' own attitude to historical events. The university course should include not only the elements of source studies but also the analysis of personalities. Therefore, those sources should be considered, which would assist to make presentation about spiritual vector of the Russian society development. The students should realize the objective to comprehend national concept of modern Russia. Only after considering the key points of self-consciousness of the Russian society, it is possible to rely on development of weighted formulations in such a significant for the country case. Involvement into searching for solution to this problem is able to rise citizen potential of students, to create a vivid interest in comprehension of the past, to make them participants in the history and not third-party observers.

Finally, the presented concept of the History course is aimed at formation of worldview foundations and values of student's personality [15, 16].

4 Conclusion

Comprehension of the past allows disclosing the main trends of history: acceleration of human development in historical time; increasing unevenness in the development of historical communities; complication of global human relations; increase in turbulence of

public relations; changes in logics of social behavior. Large-scale picture of the historical process, denoting key points of human development, can become the basis for self-plunging into the ocean of historical cognition. This creates assurance of students in necessity of humanitarian approach in professional training, which corresponds to the forming strategy of humanitarian space of a modern university.

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