

The Art of Writing Utopian and Dystopian Novels in the World Literature

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Abstract: This article is devoted to the history of the creation of utopian and dystopian novels, which have a special place and form in modern world literature, and their current development. The place of utopian and dystopian novels in world literature is incomparable. Dystopian societies are described in many works of fiction, the action of which in the literature of the New Age takes place in the future. Dystopia as a genre is often used to draw attention to real problems for the author in the environment, politics, economics, religion, technology, etc.

Keywords: utopia, dystopia, society, common power, fear, horror, future, freedom.

1. Introduction

Utopia is a promised land, a dream of a beautiful, just state - with a slightly changed look at things, it becomes a real nightmare, where human individuality must be destroyed. A modern person, reading, for example, the great utopia of Tomaso Campanella "The City of the Sun", is likely to consider the state system described there by no means a paradise on Earth, although the author himself intended this glorious city as the best of places.

Dystopia talks about what will happen when a utopian society begins to develop. And if utopia depersonalizes a person without taking into account his individuality, then dystopia shows that such an attitude towards the individual leads to global social crises. Dystopia emerged as a separate literary genre quite late. In 1952, an American political scientist, professor of philosophy Glenn Robert Negley and professor of English literature John Max Patrick, compiling an anthology of utopian literary works "In Search of Utopia: An Anthology of Imaginary Societies", identified some of them in a separate category of dystopia, that is, something that destroying utopia, the opposite of it.

2. Methodology

The present study employed significant number of dystopian novels which were written by well-known writers around the world. Evidently, attempts to write dystopias were carried out long before the beginning of the 20th century, when, with the development of socialist utopian ideas, great dystopias were born. The first dystopia is sometimes called the work of the English philosopher Thomas Hobbes "Leviathan", written in 1651. In it, the author argues that base human nature - greed, craving for violence, selfishness - can only be curbed by a strong authoritarian monster state, like the biblical Leviathan. The book shocked the public that it was banned and burned in England, as well as in Russia, when it was published in our country 2 centuries later. But still, this is not a dystopia in the generally accepted sense, because Thomas Hobbes did not consider such a state structure to be vicious, rather, on the contrary, this is his kind of utopian plan for the development of society.

"As long as people live without a common power that keeps them all in fear, they are in that state which is called war, and precisely in the state of war of all against all."

Thomas Hobbes

One of the first dystopias is also called the story of the flying island of Laputa in the third book of Gulliver's Travels by Jonathan Swift, published in 1727. This is an almost technocratic dystopia about an island of scientists who are completely out of touch with real life.

One can list dystopian elements in various works for a long time: in the book "Five Hundred Million Begums" (1879) by Jules Verne, in the novels of Wells and Jack London, but the main dystopian novel in which a fully formed genre manifested itself, without a doubt, is "We" by Evgeny Zamyatin.

All the most powerful anti-utopian works of the world appeared in the 20th century after the First World War, when people knew the horror of weapons of mass destruction, and after the October Revolution, the great experiment to create a utopian communist society. The experience was set in a real country, on real people, in real time. The first who made an attempt to understand what was happening was Evgeny Zamyatin, by the way, an ideological socialist. Zamyatin wrote his world-famous novel in 1920, and the first edition was published in the USA in English in 1924. "We" determined the development of the genre in English-language literature for many years.

The famous anti-utopias "Brave New World" by Huxley, "1984" by Orwell are a continuation of the theme of total control over people and power for the sake of power, begun by the Soviet writer. Meanwhile, in the native language "We" was printed in the USSR only in 1988.

The dystopias of the 20th century, although they take the reader into the distant future, if you look closely, describe the present, i.e. time in which the authors lived. This is an attempt to comprehend one's reality, moving away from it to the maximum distance. This is the only way to understand what is happening with society and the people in it. According to Zamyatin, people are the cogs of the system with inventory numbers instead of names, and society as a whole is the arithmetic mean, Orwell has a society of total lies and falsifications, a state that is always at war, Huxley has a consumer society with the Lord God Ford in the red corner.

All anti-utopians felt that the world was heading for the abyss and tried to figure out how to stop this fall.

"All animals are equal, but some are more equal than others."

George Orwell, Animal Farm

The famous anti-utopias of Zamyatin, Platonov, Huxley, Orwell, Bradbury surpassed any utopias ever written, although they emerged from them.

The next dystopian novel which we would like to mention is "Never let me go" by Kazuo Ishiguro. It is a modern novel in which the reader finds himself not in the future, but in an alternative past. The author describes the UK of the 20th century and a mysterious isolated boarding school, which seems to be bringing up ordinary children. Educators seriously prepare them for the future, zealously monitor the health of the wards, but it is not immediately clear what exactly awaits the children ahead and how they got here.

The reader observes the main character of the book, who recalls her childhood in a boarding school, the truth that she learned and life after that. This is a sad story about friendship, love and a possible future.

3. Results

To recap the main findings one must said that in the 21st century, the genre dystopia does not lose its positions, many works of modern writers have features of dystopia. Dystopia has given rise to separate genres that are popular in modern science fiction literature - post-apocalyptic and

cyberpunk. Distinctive features of the dystopian genre. Despite the variety of themes and forms of dystopian works, they all have a number of similar features:

1. The described society cannot be called ideal. The reader understands that the life of the characters is unbearable, even if they do not yet realize it.
2. In dystopia, the result of the implementation of utopian ideas is shown, and this result is terrible, the action usually takes place in the distant future.
3. Anti-utopians in their works use the grotesque, paradoxes, satire, because their goal is to bring utopian ideas to the point of absurdity.
4. The plot is based on the conflict of the individual with the society, as soon as individuality and doubts appear, the utopian haze begins to collapse.
5. The prerequisites for a dystopian social system are either a thirst for power and greed, or a beautiful-hearted desire to forcibly drag people into a new beautiful world.
6. Total control over people due to complete distrust of them, sophisticated propaganda methods paralyze thinking skills.
7. In many ways, dystopia is a genre of political satire.

Dystopias always raise the theme of freedom. The conflict between the free individual and the state machine, which strives for total control and is most afraid of losing power, was relevant both in the 1920s, when Zamyatin turned the utopian genre on its head, and today.

Modern literature is hard to imagine without dystopian ideas. The fulcrum of postmodernity is the realization that a dystopian society is an accomplished fact, a reality in which we exist. It's hard to argue with this. Rereading the great anti-utopians of the 20th century, one is amazed at how much these fantastic novels reflect our reality.

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