

Characteristics of the Fantasy Genre in Modern English Literature

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Abstract: Today, many educators and parents complain that we, modern teenagers, do not read fiction, replacing this fascinating process with reading fashionable youth magazines. Yes, we read little, haphazardly, we read what is fashionable, first, what has been filmed and caused a resonance in society. According to sociological research, every fifth book read today by teenagers is written in the fantasy genre. Moreover, of course, young men show the greatest interest in fantasy.

Keywords: fiction, sociological research, fantasy genre, modern literature, fantastic book, fantastic literature.

I. Introduction

Reading fantasy works not only makes you worry about the hero and together with the hero, not only captivates and entertains, but also teaches, helps to make decisions. A fantastic book saves from loneliness, boredom, resentment. Most readers, including teenagers, try to imitate goodies. This is the relevance of our work, the theme of which is: "The World of Fantasy in Modern Literature".

II. Literature review

Until now, there are disputes about what can be attributed to fantasy, and what is not, because the concept of it has no clearly defined boundaries. However, most often, fantasy means a special direction of fiction: "Fantasy is a type of fantastic literature, or literature about the extraordinary, based on the plot assumption of an irrational nature. This assumption has no logical motivation in the text, assuming the existence of facts and phenomena that are not amenable, unlike science fiction, to rational explanation.

"In the modern literary lexicon, the definition of fantasy is increasingly common, which is a whole literature where the boundaries of the real, the fantastic and the unreal, the mystical are blurred."

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"In the most general case, fantasy is a work where the fantastic element is incompatible with the scientific picture of the world."

"Fantasy is a description of worlds like ours, worlds with magic working in them, worlds with a clear boundary between Darkness and Light. These worlds can be some variations of the Earth in the distant past, the distant future, alternative present, as well as parallel worlds that exist outside of the Earth.

III. Analysis

All definitions above are rather descriptive and give too broad a description: fantasy is any work in which there is an element of the inexplicable, mystical, not amenable to rational interpretation.

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Based on this interpretation, almost all science fiction literature can be classified as fantasy, except for science fiction with its canonical rigor and scientific certainty. However, the works of romantics of the XIX century, symbolists, postmodernists, "The Master and Margarita" by M. Bulgakov, "The Little Prince" by A. Saint-Exupery fully meet the above requirements. Researchers attribute even works of antiquity to fantasy:

"One of the first authors who worked within the literary direction of fantasy was the ancient Greek satirist Lucian of Samosata, 2nd century AD."

Some researchers believe that fantasy is a kind of literary fairy tale. "In terms of external parameters, fantasy is a kind of fantastic fairy tale." "Fairytale phantasmagoria of fictional worlds" calls the fantasy writer E. Gevorkyan.

The reference book "Russian Science Fiction of the 20th Century in Names and Faces" offers the clearest definition of fantasy:

"Fantasy is a kind of fusion of a fairy tale, science fiction and an adventure novel into a single ("parallel", "secondary") artistic reality with a tendency to recreate, rethink the mythical archetype and form a new world within its boundaries."

Researchers find in fantasy elements of a heroic epic, legend, chivalric romance, literary fairy tale, romantic story, Gothic novel, symbolist occult-mystical literature, postmodern novel, etc. It can be seen that all of the listed genres and trends are somehow connected with the myth. Unlike the mythological novels of the 20th century, fantasy mythologism is the conscious desire of the author to create a fantastic mythology by analogy with ancient systems. Fantasy is based on a world model that reveals such properties of mythological thinking as the non-isolation of a person from the environment, the personalization of good and evil, the humanization of natural phenomena, the identification of microcosm and macrocosm, spatio-temporal syncretism, binary logic.

Therefore, "fantasy is "a type of fantastic literature based on the use of mythological and fairy tale motifs. In its modern form, it was formed at the beginning of the 20th century.

Fantasy works most often resemble a historical adventure novel, which takes place in a fictional world close to the real middle Ages, whose characters encounter supernatural phenomena and creatures. Often fantasy is built based on archetypal plots. Unlike science fiction, fantasy does not seek to explain the world in which the work takes place in terms of science. This world itself exists in the form of some kind of assumption (most often its location relative to our reality is not specified at all: whether it is a parallel world, or another planet), and its physical laws may differ from the realities of our world. In such a world, the existence of gods, witchcraft, mythical creatures (dragons, elves, gnomes, and trolls), ghosts and any other fantastic creatures can be real. At the same time, the fundamental difference between the "miracles" of fantasy and their fairy-tale counterparts is that they are the norm of the described world and act systematically, like the laws of nature."

The fantasy genre has developed in literature in the last century, but it originates from ancient times and is very closely connected with the cultural traditions, customs of the peoples, which are reflected in myths, legends, and fairy tales. It is believed that the prehistory of this genre began with chivalric romances of the middle Ages. Their action unfolded in historical time, but they take place in a conditional "enchanted" space, where real, genuine geography, temporal space, and boundaries are not important. Usually it was a kind of kingdom where knights with strength, courage, ingenuity oppose sorcerers and sorcerers, monsters, giants; templates, the traditions of modern fantasy, began to emerge in chivalric romances. For the first time, the image of the ideal Light Kingdom appears in them, leading a fierce struggle, sometimes endless, with the mighty

forces of Darkness and Evil. The main motive in them is the knight's dangerous journey for the sake of some higher goal. Here the theme of the struggle for the possession of a certain sacred object and the image of a kind wizard-assistant who does not immediately help the hero arise.

The true founder of fantasy is considered to have entered the history of literature under his hereditary title - Lord Dunsany. Edward John Moreton Drax Plunkett, 18th Baron Dunsany (eng. Edward John Moreton Drax Plunkett, 18th Baron of Dunsany; July 24, 1878, London - October 25, 1957, Dublin) - Irish English-language writer and poet, one of the pioneers of the genre fantasy. Dunsany wrote mainly to entertain sophisticated audiences, and published books at his own expense under the name Lord Dunsany. He is listed among the founding fathers of the fantasy genre thanks to books about the imaginary land of Pegana: the collections *The Gods of Pegana* (1905), *Time and the Gods*, and stories from the books *Tales of the Three Hemispheres*. In the United States, the works of Dunsany, who lived there for a long time, were considered simply a novelty in the abundant flow of magazine literature; the likely course of events in America was connected with the journalist Abraham Merritt. After Merritt, the term "fantasy" appeared in the protocol. It was at this time that Robert Irwin Howard began writing the story of Conan. Nevertheless, despite the large number of diverse writers, the founder of the fantasy genre, in the modern sense, is still traditionally considered John Ronald Reuel Tolkien (1892-1973), an English writer, literary critic, who best worked out the fantastic world of heroes he created.

IV. Discussion

A revolution in the development of the genre occurred in 1954-1956: it was then that John Ronald Reuel Tolkien's epic novel trilogy *The Lord of the Rings* was published. As you know, this book was such a success and spawned so many imitations that it overshadowed everything previously written in the fantasy genre. It is from this moment that the prosperity of fantasy begins the mass demand for the genre and its especially intensive development.

The premises of fantasy also began to emerge at the beginning of the 20th century - and, as in England, they were based on modernist myth making. Literary historians believe that Fyodor Sologub "A Created Legend", Valery Bryusov "The Fiery Angel" and Alexander Grin "The Shining World", "Running on the Waves" and the whole cycle about "Greenland" as a whole came closest to creating fantasy in the modern sense of the word. However, after Soviet literary criticism proclaims "scientific" and "class" as the dominant features of science fiction, the magic practically disappears. However, the first attempts to create Russian fantasy in Russia were made by Maria Semyonova. Starting with a fantasy action movie, she created her own hero, the Russian "Conan" - Wolfhound.

Russian fantasy develops and wins more and more readers. Yuri Nikitin, Svyatoslav Loginov, the spouses Dyachenko, Alexander Lukyanenko, Elena Khaetskaya, Yulia Latynina, Maxim Fray, Kir Bulychev - the works of these writers, written at the junction of various fantasy trends, are the most read today. Currently, there are three main areas of fantasy literature: classical, historical and scientific. Within these areas, subgenres are distinguished: mystical, heroic, and adventurous - adventure, philosophical - parable, parody, humorous fantasy, fantasy of parallel worlds, fantasy about modernity, detective and love fantasy.

Classical fantasy is a subgenre of fantasy based on a fictional world in which the miracle is real and the world itself is idealistic, religious, and magical. Unlike science fiction, fantasy does not seek to explain the world in which the work takes place. This world itself exists hypothetically, often its location relative to our reality is not specified in any way, and its physical laws differ from earthly ones. In such a world, the existence of dragons, elves, gnomes, trolls, ghosts and any other fantastic creatures can be real. At the same time, the fundamental difference between fantasy miracles and

their fairy-tale counterparts is that they are the norm of the described world and operate systematically, like the laws of nature.

The most important, fundamental element of classic fantasy literature is the combination of absolute fiction and reality. Moreover, the main share goes to fiction, while realism and authenticity play auxiliary roles of the second plan.

It is the most popular genre of fantasy that even rivals science fiction. For example, Green Alexander "Running on the Waves", Rowling Joan "Harry Potter", Tolkien John "The Lord of the Rings", "The Hobbit" and others.

Historical fantasy. The plot is based on a legend about a striking historical fact or hero (the Crusades, witch-hunts, the adventures of King Arthur or Merlin). Historical realities or facts are rarely taken into account, but there are historical surroundings and a bit of magic.

Science fantasy is a hybrid direction created at the intersection of science fiction and fantasy, which is characterized by a combination of science fiction elements with fabulous mythological tradition. From fantasy, the magical world and magic are borrowed, and from science fiction, a strict pseudoscientific explanation of these phenomena. O. P. Kulik considers science fantasy to be an offshoot of science fiction, where magic gets a rational explanation.

Boris Nevsky considered the evolution of the concept of «scientific fantasy» in the article "Dragons and spaceships: a variety of techno-fantasy". Forrest Ackerman as a synonym for science fiction coined the term «science fantasy» in 1935. In 1950, Walter Gillings understood science fantasy as part of science fiction that was implausible from the point of view of science of that time (for example, the use of nuclear weapons in the novel by H. G. fantasy).

Fantasy genre features include:

The atmosphere of magic or fairy tale, which is based on a mystery or riddle associated with unusual phenomena, heroes, battles or magic items.

Beings or objects that do not exist in reality. Or unusual in appearance, or endowed with extraordinary abilities, for example, talking animals, animated trees, dragons, ghouls, unicorns, nature spirits and others like them. An inexplicable power - either permeating the world, or concentrated in seemingly ordinary phenomena (for example, living and dead water), in people (sorcerers, soothsayers, witches) or in objects (magic staves, invisibility caps and other artifacts).

The existence of an unreal world. Either by itself (for example, another planet, fictional world, alternate reality), or a fictional world in the real world (for example, the mythical Olympus, the enchanted kingdom, Oz), or an invisible world that only initiates feel (for example, the world of spirits and ghosts).

V. Conclusion

Knowledge that goes beyond the real, reasonable, logical or scientifically grounded (characteristics of the system of magic, national characteristics of a new race, pseudoscientific discoveries or inventions). Sometimes all these features are present in an explicit form, sometimes in a hidden form. However, even being hidden, they emphasize the nature of the fantasy genre and distinguish it from the general flow of entertainment and adventure literature.

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