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FANTASY AS A DEVELOPING PHENOMENON OF MODERN ART

The article deals with the problem of interpreting the phenomenon of fantasy in modern science. Fantasy has spawned many discussions related to the definition of its sources and genre nature, the relationship with the myth-folklore tradition, the problems of classification, the specifics of extra-literary functions and many others. We consider fantasy to be one of the branches of speculative fiction, which naturally formed into an independent industry in the second half of the twentieth century. Initially having appeared as a genre, fantasy subsequently has outgrown this category. Today we can say with confidence that fantasy is a meta-genre, which has its own structure of modeling the world and unites various literary genres (novel, novelette, lyric poetry and others) and types of art (sculpture, cinema, animation, graphic arts, painting, and others) with a common subject of artistic representation.

Key words: *fantasy, meta-genre, mythology and folklore tradition, problems, speculative fiction, themes.*

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Introduction. Fantasy is quite a new phenomenon of literature with a rapid development. It covers completely different subjects and develops a wide range of works. Standing out from speculative fiction into an independent genre, it is obvious that fantasy gradually expanded ideologically and thematically. And today we can point out that fantasy has overgrown the concept of the literary genre by having won various forms of art such as sculpture, painting, animation, cinema and others.

Olena Chernyavska determines that such a dynamics of the phenomenon of fantasy, integrated into different spheres, requires constant research: «At the end of the XXth century – at the beginning of the XXIst century fantasy takes up more and more stable positions, which can be explained both by sociocultural tendencies and specific literary peculiarities of this genre. National variants enrich and diversify the literature of fantasy, because the author's fantasy is not limited by a clear framework of the genre, or, as we can conclude, literary genres» [14, p. 330].

The purpose of our work is to give the analysis of the material of recent years devoted to the determining of the place and semantics of fantasy in modern science. We offer our own point of view of the problem of existing of fantasy in different spheres.

Literature Review. Being a relatively new phenomenon in literature, fantasy has united researchers of completely different fields of knowledge around itself. Anna Grytting points out that today fantasy has proliferated from purely childish writing to the literature satisfying the reader's interests of any age group [17, p. 4–5].

Philologists argue about the genre nature and genesis of this phenomenon (Stephanie Dreier, Ekaterina Lugovaya, Tat'yana Markova, Valeriya Tolkacheva, Paula M. Zaja, Svitlana Lyevochkina, Oksana Marchuk). Psychologists talk about the causes of this type of work, associating it with a constant informational and mental voltage and the need to release emotions, fantasy in another world, fictional and successful. Philosophers seek

the deep meaning of fantasy writing, projecting ideas into other areas of knowledge (Abigail Linhardt).

Originally fantasy was considered to be the literature of «other worlds» which can be monitored in the works by Aisling Byrne and Paula M. Zaya. Fantasy was associated with the supernatural (as it is analyzed in the works of Stephanie Dreier and Angelskär Svein) or with the literature of escapism (presented by the work of Abigail Mazour).

Thus, the study of Anastasia Demyna is devoted to the philosophical analysis and understanding of fantasy as a phenomenon of modern culture. The researcher claims that by virtue of its mass character fantasy spreads into almost all spheres of human activity, forming a particular culture-forming field of the individual and influencing the development of society as a whole: «...being a reflection of fantastic ideas and images, various fantasy products operate in the sociocultural space as simulacra. The tendency of fantasy to virtualization, as well as the nature of secondary reality, ontologically inherent in fantasy, allows us to speak about the evolution of fantasy as a third-order simulacra, according to the theory of J. Baudrillard» [2, p. 20].

The sociological research of Fyodor Kosichkin proves the popularity of fantasy among different age groups, and above all among adolescents: «According to the sales rankings, in the middle of the second decade of the 21st century, the modern fairy tale – fantasy – is the main genre of middle and early teens literature» [3]. The above is confirmed by the research made by Irina Sentemova, who claims that according to sociological research, every fifth book read by teenagers today is written in the fantasy genre [8].

A sociological study made by Olga Utkina was designed to reveal the basic reading preferences of boys and girls. So, the boys now mostly prefer «adventures, fantasy, funny stories, fairy tales, stories about animals <...> Favorite characters are Harry Potter, Vova Grushin, fairy-tale heroes» [13, p. 253]. While girls «prefer the following genres: fairy tales, poetry, novels, stories, children's detective stories, «horror stories», fantasy» [12, p. 328]. The conclusion is quite obvious: in early childhood, fairy tales have a tremendous influence on the development of the personality, which is subsequently reflected in the choice of literature for reading.

It is possible that the interest of the younger generation specifically to the works of fantasy is due to its roots in the fairy tale. Children learn to perceive the world around them through a fairy tale told in childhood. Hence, the cognitive and educational function of both fairy tales and fantasy works is obvious: «The main myths that lie in the fairy tale are always the hero's journey behind his inner world, the Soul. Fairy tales always start from a state of rest: «Once upon a time». No matter how disturbed the peace is in a fairy tale. It is important that a person who absorbed fairy tales from his childhood keeps knowledge of how to act and overcome obstacles, how to grow up as a worthy person!» [7, p. 176].

What is the reason for the popularity of fantasy among the younger generation? Fyodor Kosichkin sees it in the following: «books about dragons, princesses, magic manuscripts and spells are becoming more and more popular not because they lead away from reality, but because they bring it closer» [3]. And it is difficult to disagree with this statement, since the author justifies it as follows: «Fantasy <...> operates with universal categories of good and evil and exploits the discovery of archetypes» [3].

Psychological studies of fantasy are somewhat similar to sociological ones: they are also aimed at studying the perception of works by various age and gender groups. However, the angle is fundamentally different, that is, they are interested in the mechanisms of perception and processing of information contained in fantasy, as well as how it can affect consciousness in the future.

In such a way, Marina Krivoruchko and Inna Alekseeva studying the influence of fantasy on the youth audience have come to the conclusion that it has a twofold effect on the personality of the reader or viewer. On the one hand, it is positive as it lies in the fact that fantasy makes it possible to relieve tension quickly, get rid of stress, easily surviving the journey in time and space. The latter, according to the psychologists, allows you to create the effect of «canceling the past» with its failures and problems, encourages the reader or viewer to work, and also helps to find the meaning of existence [4, p. 51]. On the other hand, there is the effect of escapism, which acquires an ambiguous assessment in the circles of psychologists.

Attempts to attract young people to reading could be a worthy substitute for computer games. And we are sure that a departure from reality in reading is much more useful than uncontrolled games containing numerous examples of cruel, asocial behavior, which often turn out to be veiled. Child and adolescent psyche is not always able to recognize it. Fantasy, like games, allows to make a departure from the real not always prosperous world into the world of dreams and fantasy where the reader becomes a detached observer or participant of the events, who, in fact, will not be bothered by the problems of fictional worlds. However, some researchers see the problem of an informationally oversaturated society in escapism that needs emotional release (Elena Trufanova). One of the ways of such «escape from the reality» is to immerse yourself in reading fantasy: «for the escapist the main thing is not movement in space, but the changes in self-awareness and perception of reality that this movement causes. The only thing which is important is exactly what emotions, associations, images, impressions are arisen in connection with the new environment ...» [11, p. 104].

Thus, we can conclude that despite the fact that fantasy is widely studied and interpreted, its inexorable dynamics generates more and more problems that need to be answered.

Problems of defining the genre of fantasy. Perhaps the greatest interest in fantasy is for literary studies, one of the important problems of which is the problem of the definition of the genre. There is no single definition of this literary phenomenon, which proves the undying interest in fantasy. Most of the discussions are related to the formal content side of fantasy works. For example, Tzvetan Todorov refers the works that contain a fantastic element to fantastic genres (historical and theoretical). Under «the fantastic» researcher understands: «The hesitation experienced by a man who knows only the laws of nature when he observes a phenomenon that seems supernatural» [10, p. 25].

In other words, Tzvetan Todorov understands the fantastic as some borderline between the unusual and the miraculous: «The fantasy genre involves the integration of the reader into the world of characters, it is determined by the dual perception of the described events by the reader. It should immediately be clarified that, to put it this way, we do not mean a particular real reader but the reader's «function» implicit in the text» [10, p. 30].

In such a way Stephanie Dreier defines fantasy fiction as «an independent literary genre with a distinct set of thematic and structural features, <...> comprised of narratives in which the violation of natural laws, otherwise known as the supernatural component, is indispensable to the integrity of the narrative» [16, p. 26]. While Paula M. Zaja examines fantasy through the mirror of postmodern defining it as «a mode of writing which uses imagination and metaphor to revise reality in a way that reflects and confronts what we experience in our daily lives» [18, p. 1].

Sergey Galiev structures definitions of fantasy into three groups: Magic Fairy Tale, the irrational and the inexplicable and «a modern heroic-mythological epic» [1]. However, the author himself defines this phenomenon through the prism of fairy-tale prose,

pointing out that in many ways fantasy repeats and, most importantly, goes back to a fairy tale.

From our point of view, fantasy is one of the branches of speculative fiction which appeared first in the framework of literary epic, and subsequently conquers other literary genres and types of art. This is fully consistent with the definition of the meta-genre proposed by Rita Spivak, where she suggests considering the meta-genre as: «a structurally expressed, neutral in relation to the genus, a stable invariant of many historically specific means of artistic modeling of the world, united by a common subject of artistic representation» [9, p. 53].

Consequently, at first, a certain supergenre structural-semantic core was formed, that is, structural principles for the construction of the artistic world, which makes it possible to combine the works into a fantasy «union». Naum Leiderman called this phenomenon «senior genre», which originates in the framework of a literary movement or trend, and extends to more distant genres: «If we are talking about the genre community, then we should look for the grounds for their contraction in the «nest» («family») precisely in the typologically related genre-forming principles, that is, the principles of the creation of the world-image» [5, p. 328].

We believe that these principles of the world building include the re-creation of a nonexistent impossible world where heroes and their antagonists necessarily operate with the use of magical objects to achieve their goal under the opposition to the evil on a global scale, etc. These elements are common to all kinds of fantasy. Moreover, in spite of the complexity, deep psychology and the philosophical nature of the images, there is a certain typification in them similar to that in the fairy tale or in the classicist works. It is primarily about the determination of characters as a good or evil beginning, the recurrence of certain plot forms. However, such a typicality in the creation of fantasy works does not detract from the originality and artistic value of each work. Up to date, a number of issues related to determining the place of fantasy in modern literature and art in general, its genres and classification, its functions in modern society and many others remain relevant.

The sources of fantasy. An important problem concerning the nature of the young phenomenon of fantasy has not been solved up to date and has generated a large number of discussions. Some researchers call it the source of the myth, claiming that fantasy is built according to the principles of the mythological world order. However, fantasy as a literary work, according to the predominant number of definitions, creates an artistic world that is fictional. The myth is oriented to reality: it is the first cognitive system of the archaic man. According to Mircea Eliade, it is a sacred story that represents the real event: «The myth expounds a sacred story, tells the story of an event that occurred in memorable times, «the beginning of all beginnings». The myth historicizes how the reality, thanks to the exploits of supernatural beings, has achieved its embodiment and realization, be it an all-encompassing reality, the cosmos, or just a fragment of it» [15, p. 15].

In addition, the myth is devoid of poetry for various reasons (see Yuri Lotman and Boris Uspenskiy «Myth – name – culture» [6, p. 72–73]). Myth acquired poetic design only in folklore. This means that only through folklore myth penetrates into literature. Another source of fantasy is the oral-poetic tradition, especially the genre of the fairy tale. Several researchers define them as fairy tales, since they are dedicated to fictional, non-existent worlds, characters, phenomena. This is not entirely correct, since the fairy tale has developed its structure and a steady sequence of actions: it never changes the position, the development of the action, the climax and the denouement (see Vladimir Propp «Morphology of the Folktale»). In literature this was possible only in classic drama. In general, literature strives for creative freedom, and fantasy is not an exception. It should

also be noted that artistic devices in the fairy tale are usually stable, and their originality is valued in literature.

Conclusion. Fantasy as a relatively young literary phenomenon today is the focus of many sciences: philosophy, psychology, sociology, philology. However, it has not yet acquired a clear definition. It is called the type, type of literature, genre, genre variety. With confidence, we can say that today fantasy has grown into a genre category. We define it as a meta-genre, which has its own structure for modeling the world and unites various not only literary genres (novel, novelette, lyrics, and others) as a common subject of artistic representation, but also arts (sculpture, cinema, animation, graphic arts, painting, and others). The main source of fantasy is the myth-folk tradition, however, it has gained a lot from literatures of different eras (Medieval royal chivalry, baroque, gothic romance, romantic and modernist poetics of the fantastic). The presence of a large number of attempts to classify this phenomenon indicates the constant dynamics of fantasy, as well as the prospects of this kind of research.

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РОЗВИТОК ФЕНОМЕНУ ФЕНТЕЗИ У СУЧАСНІЙ НАУЦІ

Стаття присвячена актуальній проблемі визначення місця фентезі як метажанрового утворення в сучасній науці. Як відомо, цей феномен знаходиться в центрі уваги багатьох наук: філософії, культурології, психології, соціології, філології, – що породжує дискусії, пов'язані з визначенням його джерел, жанрової природи, проблемами класифікації, специфікою позалітературних функцій тощо.

Філософсько-культурологічні дослідження (А. Дьоміна, В. Пігулевський) доводять, що фентезі є закономірним продуктом епохи постмодернізму, який в силу свого масового характеру поширюється майже на всі сфери людської діяльності, формуючи особливе культурологічне поле індивіда, і впливає на розвиток суспільства в цілому. Розвідки Ф. Косічкіна та О. Уткіної, присвячені соціально-психологічним проблемам фентезі, доводять його популярність і користь серед різних вікових груп, а передовсім – у підлітків. Зокрема, фентезі, подібно до комп'ютерних ігор, дозволяє відійти від реального, не завжди успішного, світу у світ снів і фантазій, де читач стає відірваним спостерігачем або учасником подій, в які не проникають звичайні повсякденні турботи. Проте ескапізм має подвійну семантику: з одного боку, за його допомогою можна провести психокорекцію, з іншого – надмірне захоплення «іншими» світами може вказувати на набутий психічний розлад або навіть аутизм.

Ми визначаємо фентезі як галузь фантастики, яка закономірно сформувалась у другій половині ХХ століття. На сьогодні з упевненістю можна говорити, що фентезі переросло категорію літературного жанру. Це метажанр, який має свою структуру моделювання світу та поєднує загальним предметом художнього зображення не тільки різноманітні літературні жанри (роман, повість, лірику та інші), а й види мистецтва (скульптура, кіно, мультиплікація, плакат, живопис). Постійна його динаміка призводить до розширення кількості тем та, як наслідок, читацького кола (наприклад, дитяче, жіноче, чоловіче, міське фентезі).

Головними джерелами фентезі, в яких воно запозичувало різноманітні способи відтворення дійсності, стали міфо-фольклорна та фантастична літературна традиції, зокрема, середньовіччя, бароко, готичний роман, романтична і модерністська поетики. Наявність великої кількості спроб визначити це явище свідчить про його постійну динаміку та про перспективи таких досліджень.

Ключові слова: метажанр, міфо-фольклорна традиція, проблематика, тематика, фантастична література, фентезі.