

THE PROBLEM OF MORAL AND SOCIAL DECLINE IN ANTIUTOPIAN NOVEL

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The article is aimed to highlight the problem of antiutopian English novel. The future of human civilization has been worrying people for many centuries. Thus, a great number of social theories concerning the moral degradation of society and its return to the preindustrial condition have been framed. The development of civilization and global technological progress not only changed the interaction of nature and society, but also led to the degradation of moral values. The last 50 years was a poignant phase in the development of social theories.

As for the literary trend, antiutopian literature developed in the XVI century. Its traces were disclosed in the works of François Rabelais, Francis Bacon, Tommaso Campanella and Thomas More. In their works the centrality is based on the concepts of ideal state and satirical images of society. Altogether, antiutopia represents a synthesis of two literary genres: utopian novel and science fiction. Its major practical assignment lies in "revealing and accusation of negative political and social phenomena" [1, 34]. As science fiction novels, antiutopia performs a prognostic function, attempting to predict the future of human civilization. In this case, the pathos of warning amplifies the contradiction between nature and humanity. As the result, antiutopia can be considered in the light of interconnection between «today» and «tomorrow».

As a particular literary genre, antiutopian novel is regarded as a reaction to the impossibility of utopia to exist in everyday life. Moreover, antiutopia as a kind of fiction consists in "examining political and social conceptions in order to identify their fallibility and harmfulness for mankind" [2, 152]. Modern antiutopian genre is not the consequence of experiments; it is made over the characters by the author himself. The fictitious preconditions of the formation of antiutopian novel are:

- philosophical background;
- combination of imaginative and real;

- the usage of stylistic devices borrowed from science fiction;
- moral degradation of society;
- the process of evolution and its consequences;

The content of antiutopia aims at the subjective depicting of unfavorable events in the context of human history. This description implies both social and moral aspects of human life. The centrality is made on concrete correlations, such as «man-history», «man-society», «man-technological progress». A wide range of topics includes the ethic problem of good and evil, freedom and necessity, human degradation. These problems are global; they determine the versatility of antiutopia. The authors of antiutopian novels had different beliefs on politics and reforms, but their description cannot be correlated with a certain society or political system; these features are inherent to every modern state. This versatility is established due to the peculiar correlations of the terms «time» and «space». The events take place in the conditional geographical locality, even in the case when certain names of cities and countries are mentioned.

The peculiar feature of the antiutopian novel is the depiction of society formation. The causes and consequences are in line that means that the authors work out the reasons of civilization decline. These are usually antiutopian dramas, in which totalitarian system is viewed on the different stages of its development. One of the major characteristics of the antiutopian novel is intellectuality. It compares antiutopia to the intellectual novel. The writers present the models of reality, not the reality itself. There is a particular focus on understanding the sharp distinctions between real and imaginary things. In antiutopian novels, social and moral issues are embodied in the extraordinary artistic form. Its originality is provided by a parabolic structure. The characters are brought to the near or distant future, which is full of global changes and catastrophes. This depiction strengthens the claim of dramatic changes in human life. The climax of the novel is getting ready, and it is not contradictory to the previous thoughts of the author. This kind of drama is different from any other type of the novel. Complicated structures of antiutopian novel prove their being universal. The place of action is not crucial; it is, as a rule, predetermined by the plot of the novel. Still, some of the writers find it natural to emphasize that the action is taking place at the moment of description.

To conclude it all, the antiutopian novel is considered to be the satirical model of the future. The accent is made on the predictions

about human civilization, and most of them are full of pessimistic ideas. Based on the social theories, antiutopia first appeared in the ancient myths and Bible stories, but it became a separate genre only in the 19th century. The process of genre mixture had a great impact on forming antiutopian drama. This process was highlighted in the 20th century, with the enrichments and changes in the genre theory. That process was presupposed by the interaction of literary and art genres. Taking all these features into consideration, it is possible to claim, that antiutopian novel, being a model of the future, represents a strong connection between the life of society and the decline of human civilization.

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2. Volosova T. English literature (Book 1) / T. Volosova, V. Rogov. – Ternopil, 1997. – P.150–166.

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