

Мова є важливим засобом виховання особистості. Через мову відбуваються залучення студентів до духовно-моральних цінностей, вироблених людством, формування духовно багаті особистості.

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THE LANGUAGES OF SCIENCE FICTION AND THEIR ROLE IN THE CREATION OF OTHER WORLDS AND SOCIETIES

Стаття присвячена розгляду жанрових характеристик наукової фантастики. Особлива увага приділяється створенню авторами нових мов, які більшою мірою зображують суспільство та взаємовідносини між головними персонажами творів. В статті розглядається мова Вавилон-17, творцем якої є Семюель Ділені.

Ключові слова: художня література, наукова фантастика, літературний світ, мова, суспільство.

В данной статье рассматриваются жанровые характеристики научной фантастики. Непосредственно большое внимание уделяется новым вымышленным языкам, которые в значительной мере характеризуют общество и взаимоотношения между персонажами.

Ключевые слова: художественная литература, научная фантастика, литературный мир, язык, общество.

The article is focused on the analysis of the problem of genre definition of science fiction, and in particular the new languages created. The greater attention is paid to the new language Babel-17, invented by Samuel Delaney.

Key words: fiction, science fiction, fictional worlds, language, novum.

In his essay on "Fiction about the Future," H. G. Wells claims that the most significant "futurist" fiction, and the most difficult to bring off, would be that sort which uses as its main feature an estranged social order and then focuses on the struggle of a few individuals to come to terms with that social order. Kingsley Amis devotes much of his influential book on science fiction to those fictions which dramatize "social inquiry," which serve as an "instrument of social diagnosis and warning". And Isaac Asimov states that what he terms "social science fiction" is the "most mature" and the "most socially significant" form that SF (science fiction) can take. All three writers are privileging or valorizing one particular SF form, alternate society science fiction, the dominant development of which is an estranged or alternative social order. The paradigm for this fiction involves the visit to a utopian or dystopian society, during which the visitor is invited to compare that society with his or her own. Alternate society SF poses a wide assortment of questions, including the following: What constitutes a good or bad society? What is the proper relation between the individual and the community? To what extent are freedom and order mutually antagonistic? What are the main determinants of "social reality"? What is the function of particular social institutions? What is the relation between language and social order? These fictions, many of which figure as science fiction classics, mediate the proper relation between Self and Society, in general eliciting a normative reading, the establishment of a framework of value.

Dealing as it does with alien cultures and futuristic societies, alternate society science fiction often refers to, calls upon, or plays with a spectrum of language newness - from neologistic forms to alien tongues to invented languages. Indeed, these linguistic variations, as both K.L. Spencer and E.S. Rabkin show, serve to *real-ize* the imaginary SF world: "The items do more than denote the simple *thereness* of the world they belong to; they also tell us - again, usually in oblique ways - something about the *nature* of the world we find them in" [1: 43], a world whose linguistic norms call into question the norms of the society. The article deals with the investigation of the languages of Science Fiction, and in particular the language invented by Samuel Delaney and shown in his novel *Babel-17*. The object of the investigation is the novel itself. The subject is the language, which is the protagonist, the subject of the novel; however we see no example of any lexical unit of it. The language though plays a significant part in the creation of the world and the society, and social order shown in the book.

Science fiction is a literature of otherness and change, and the most self-conscious alternate society SF tries to take into account the inevitability of linguistic change and the possibility of linguistic otherness, if only by acknowledging that new and different societies presuppose new and different languages. Sorting through these linguistically self-conscious fictions, we can identify different levels of metalinguistic engagement.

We should point out from the very beginning, that in a relatively few science fictions, an invented language becomes *the* narrative dominant, in-forming the plot, the theme, and the discourse of the fiction. These fictions necessarily investigate the nature of language, the relation of language and reality, and the possibilities of linguistic otherness. The most celebrated of such fictions is Samuel Delany's *Babel-17*. Although not a single word of the invented language Babel-17 appears in the novel, its centrality is indicated in the title itself. The novel systematically interrogates the function of alternate languages, the relation between language and reality, the problems of communication, and the linguistic possibilities of SF in general.

At one level, that of form, *Babel-17* hardly seems worth close examination; it is, after all, action-packed, fast-paced, "Star Wars" space opera, involving intergalactic war, treacher-

ous spies, exotic locales, strange aliens, dangerous missions, and rousing space battles [see 2: 63-69; 3: 31]. But Delany has worked a number of important transformations upon the simple space-opera formula. His protagonist, for example, is not a macho male roustabout, but a female poet. The most dangerous weapon in the work is not an SF gadget but a mysterious invented language. The real villain of the piece is not a mad scientist or an evil empire but rather the inability of one group of human beings to communicate with another group. The plot involves gaining control of the mysterious language and using it to overcome that villain.

Language is not only the motor that drives the plot of the novel; it also dominates the text thematically. The problems of communication are frequently thematized explicitly. *Babel-17* is a novel in which strangers try desperately to learn how to communicate with one another, in which Rydra Wong searches for a language that will go to “the depth” of words.

At the beginning of the novel, no one can control the language Babel-17, in large part because it is an “impersonal language” [6: 41]; it lacks the concepts “you” and “I.” The lack of an “I” short circuits the self-critical process; the speaker of Babel-17 is unable to stand apart from her or his linguistic formulations, to subject them to critical meta-commentary. As Rydra notes, the lack of an “I” “cuts out any awareness of the symbolic process at all - which is the way we distinguish between reality and our expression of reality” [4: 189]. Without the concept “I” we are unable to recognize language for what it is. And the concepts “you” and “I” are essential to the moral sense; without them, we cannot know that “for an *I* to kill a *you* without a lot of thought is a mistake” [4: 139]. Without these all-important concepts, the novel insists, we are blind to the idea of the Self and the Other. Rydra is able to gain complete control over the language by creating personal pronouns for it. By adding an “I” she personalizes Babel-17 and converts it to Babel-18, the language with which she and Butcher will change the world. The language system of *Babel-17* - the novel - also lacks a first person, in the form of the reader. Once that person has been added to the novel, once he or she has personalized it, then it too assumes a moral dimension, it too becomes self-critical. It becomes a language system that can affect reality.

Postmodern writing is aware that all systems of notation offer us models of reality rather than descriptions of it. Fiction, of course, is one such notational system. For Delany, however, SF is a privileged system, because in it, more than in any genre, one can legitimately undertake the search for new language models with which to construct or invent reality. In SF novels such as *Babel-17*, the fictionist can “use language in much the same way that Babel-17 is used: to ... force the reader to think in new ways” [3: 58]. SF wants to emphasize the extent to which any new language system can affect our view of reality.

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