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The concept of memory in 21st century Russian fictional dystopia

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Introduction

The dystopia as an independent genre formed in the comparatively late period, in the 19th–20th centuries, but its roots are traced back to the earliest utopias, such as Plato's "Republic", Thomas More's "Utopia", Tommaso Campanella's "The City of the Sun", and others. Metaphorically, utopia and dystopia can be defined as two views on the same problem: While utopia is the world, which order seen as ideal by a foreigner (often a traveler), then dystopia is the perspective of a resident who finds this "ideal" unsatisfactory. The place of dystopia in the system of genres is the subject of numerous discussions: some scholars consider it a variation of utopia, others – a genre of science fiction, but in this study, following B.A. Lanin, S.G. Shishkina, A.O. Aldridge, G. Clayes¹ and other researchers, we adhere to the view of dystopia as a genre distinguished from utopia.

Dystopia gained widespread readership in the 20th century, and it remains one of the most popular genres to this day: The book market features both classic and contemporary dystopias, written by domestic and foreign, emerging and well-established authors. A popular encyclopedia characterizes this genre as follows: "Literature containing a grim futurological forecast and presupposing the projection of current trends into the near or distant future"². Indeed, despite the fact that most of such works are gazing into the future, they are a grotesque reflection of current reality, the fruit of authors' reflections on social problems in a particular state and the world as a whole, their understanding, and an attempt to predict further developments.

Dystopias are always concerned with the matter of time: They reflect the problems of the *present* in the *future*, drawing on the experience of the past while rejecting it. Thus, in dystopias, it is often possible to observe how a post-apocalyptic or post-war world "assembles" society from the fragments of the past, combining various models of governance, forms of language, everyday objects, and other signs of different

¹ Lanin B.A. Russkaya literaturnaya antiutopiya XX v.: dis. ... d-ra. fil. nauk: 10.01.02. Moscow, 1993; Shishkina S.G. Literaturnaya antiutopiya: k voprosu o granichah zhanra // Vestnik gumanitarnogo fakul'teta IGHTU. Ivanovo, 2007. P. 200; Aldridge A.O. The Scientific World-View in Dystopia. Ann Arbor (MI), 1984; Suvín D. Metamorphoses of Science Fiction: On the Poetics and History of a Literary Genre. Bern, 2016. P. 83.

² Dystopia // Literatura i yazyk. Sovremennaya illyustrirovannaya enciklopediya / pod red. A.P. Gorkina. M., 2006. P. 24

epochs in one space or several adjacent locations. The reason for this phenomenon may be oblivion, which relates to the fundamental problem of memory, formulated by the French philosopher, sociologist, and psychologist M. Halbwachs³ in the early 20th century and studied by scholars such as P. Nora, H. Arendt, J. Olick⁴ and others. They have identified numerous types of memory, three of which will be of interest to the author of this work: historical, collective, and individual memory. Thus, this study will attempt to analyze various manifestations of fictional time and memory in Russian dystopias of the 21st century.

As the **material for the study**, the following dystopias, completed and published in the years 2000–2021, were selected:

- The novel "Slynx" (2000) by T.N. Tolstaya;
- The duology by V.G. Sorokin: "Day of the Oprichnik" (2006) and "The Sugar Kremlin" (2008);
- The novel "Shchast'e" ("Happiness") (2010) by E.A. Chebotareva, writing under the pseudonym Figl'-Migl'⁵;
- The novel "Transhumanism Inc." (2021) by V.O. Pelevin.

The selected dystopias, published in the 21st century, are popular among readers of different ages and are actively studied by literary scholars. For instance, a large number of scholarly articles and Ph.D. theses have been written about the novels by Tolstaya and Sorokin. However, they have rarely been analyzed in the aspect that is of interest to us (the problem of mixing different epochs; comparative analysis; memory issues).

³ Halbwachs M. Kollektivnaya i istoricheskaya pamyat' (Collective and Historical Memory). // Neprikosnovennyj zapas. M., 2005. № 2. P. 8–27.

⁴ Nora P. Vsemirnoe torzhestvo pamyati (Reasons for the current upsurge in memory). URL: <https://magazines.gorky.media/nz/2005/2/vsemirnoe-torzhestvo-pamyati.html> (Accessed: 06.05.2021); Nora P. Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Memoire // Representations. Berkeley, 1989. № 26; Arendt H. The Life of the Mind / trans. A.V. Govorunova. SPb, 2013; Olick J. Figurations of memory: a process-relational methodology illustrated on the German case // Sociologicheskoe obozrenie / per. D. Hlevnyuk. M., 2012.

⁵ The author comments on her "name" as follows: "What does it mean? It means what is written: that the author is a jester, a clown, a joker, a pea jester. This is my greeting to all the people who look in the mirror and see there the conscience of the nation" (Kurchatova N. Figl'-Migl'. URL: <https://www.sobaka.ru/entertainment/cinema/165158> (Accessed: 01.10.2020)).

The novel "Shchast'e" has attracted the attention of researchers whose field of interest is linguistic processes in contemporary literature⁶, the poetics of cynicism⁷ and intertextuality⁸.

The novel "Transhumanism Inc." by Pelevin was published as late as in 2021, so the number of works dedicated to it is small. They mainly analyze the concept of transhumanism⁹ and the recapture of contemporary realities in the novel¹⁰.

The **subject of the research** are the various manifestations of fictional time, which is a world-engendering factor that is closely related to the issue of memory.

The **methodology of the research** is based on works dedicated to dystopias (B.A. Lanin, L.M. Yur'eva, V.A. Chalikova, A.A. Chameev, S.G. Shishkina, L.T. Sargent, A.O. Aldridge, D. Suvin, G. Claeys), works on fictional space and time (M.M. Bakhtin, Y.M. Lotman, D.S. Likhachev, A.B. Esin, Z.Y. Turaeva, N.A. Nikolina, N.K. Shutaya, and others), and on the issue of memory (M. Halbwachs, P. Nora, H. Arendt, J. Olick, M.M. Bakhtin, A. Assman, R. Eyerman, A. Erll and A. Nunning, to name a few).

The study employs historical-literary and intertextual **research methods**.

The **novelty of the research** lies in the fact that the issues of mixing different epochs and the problem of memory in literature have not yet been vetted in the perspective of 21st century narratives. The texts chosen as material have not been studied from this viewpoint as well.

The **relevance of the research** is due to the growing popularity of dystopias in the first quarter of the 21st century and the profound transformations that the genre is

⁶ Akhmetova G.D. Language Life (Figl'-Migl'). The Novel "Shchaste" // Gumanitarnyj vektor. Chita, 2012. P. 7–12.

⁷ Ivanova I.N. Proza Figlya-Miglya: poetika cinizma // Vestnik Severo-Kavkazskogo federal'nogo universiteta. Stavropol', 2014. P. 178–182.

⁸ Ivanova I.N. "Chuzhoe slovo" v intellektual'noj paradigme post-postmodernistskogo romana: proza Figlya-Miglya // Slovo, vyskazyvanie, tekst v kognitivnom, pragmaticheskom i kulturologicheskom aspektah. Materialy IX Mezhdunarodnoj nauchnoj konferencii: v 2 tomah. Chelyabinsk, 2018. Vol. 1. P. 141–145.

⁹ Pogrebnaya Y.V., Ardasheva M.V. Anthropological turn in literary studies and problems of transhumanism in modern domestic and foreign literature // Aktual'nye voprosy razvitiya sovremennoj nauki i tekhnologij. Sbornik statej II Mezhdunarodnoj nauchno-prakticheskoy konferencii. Petrozavodsk, 2023. P. 141–151; Zagidulina T., Glushenkova O. Proektivnyj geroy V. Pelevina v zerkale filosofii transgumanizma. // Obraz geroya sovremennosti v proze rubezha XX–XXI vekov. Monografiya. M.; Krasnoyarsk, 2022. P. 178–192; Yan' Mejpın, Chen' Pejczyun' Problema transgumanizma v tvorcestve V. Pelevina (na primere romana "Transhumanism Inc.") // Voprosy istorii. M., 2022. P. 102–109.

¹⁰ Chernyyak M.A., Naumova L.N. Transformaciya ponyatiya "sovremennost'" v proze Viktora Pelevina // Uchenye zapiski Petrozavodskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta. Petrozavodsk, 2022. Vol. 44. № 7. P. 94–100.

undergoing due to the emergence of a large number of works by writers of different ages and levels of professionalism working in this direction. The dissertation illustrates the changes that have occurred with some genre characteristics of dystopia compared to the works of the 20th century.

The **theoretical significance of the research** lies in understanding the genesis, structure, and functions of the dystopian genre in connection with the problem of interpreting historical and collective memory.

The **practical significance** of the work consists in the possibility of using the research results in developing courses on the history of contemporary Russian literature or special courses on the theory and analysis of dystopia, as well as in courses on historical poetics. The concepts of mixing epochs and the problems of loss and substitution of memory can be relevant for studying not only Russian but also foreign literary works. This work can also be used as illustrative material for lectures on the problem of memory in literary works.

The **goal of the research** is to analyze the category of fictional time and the closely related issue of memory in the dystopias of the 21st century.

In accordance with the set goal, the dissertation accomplishes **the following tasks**:

- Identify the reasons, methods, and consequences of loss/substitution of memory in dystopian novels;
- Determine the interrelation between the mixing of different historical epochs and the problem of memory;
- Determine the place of the book and other memory carriers in the world of dystopia.

The work has been tested and discussed multiple times at postgraduate seminars of the Department of Russian Literature History at the Faculty of Philology, St. Petersburg State University. Some aspects of the work were reflected in a presentation at the linguocultural (inter-university) scientific-practical seminar "Linguocultural Dominants in Teaching Russian as a Foreign Language" (Herzen State Pedagogical University): "Russian Dystopia in Literature Classes for Advanced Language Students",

and at the All-Russian with international participation scientific-practical conference of emerging scientists "Current Problems of Philology" (27.04.23) (Ural State Pedagogical University).

The dissertation comprises an introduction, two chapters, a conclusion, and a bibliography.

The introduction defines the material, goals, tasks, and methodological foundations of the research.

The first chapter covers the history of the emergence and development of dystopia, discusses issues related to the time of the genre's origin and its independence (relative to utopia and science fiction), describes the genre characteristics of dystopian novels, analyzes various attempts to classify works belonging to this genre. The first chapter also provides a brief overview of the main theories of chronotope and memory.

The second chapter of the dissertation is divided into four sections. The first section provides an overview of the research material: it explicates the main ideas of the novels, their temporal correlation with the time of writing. The second section analyzes the depiction of the state of memory of the inhabitants of dystopian worlds, considering the problem of loss (spontaneous or intentional) and substitution of memory. The third section examines the features of different historical epochs in the analyzed works and their interaction with each other in the same space. The fourth section explores the images of carriers of human memory and examines their functions within the framework of the dystopian novels.

The third chapter is dedicated to the analysis of the selected novels from the perspective of intertextual connections, allusions, and references to myths, fairy tales, science fiction, and fantasy. It examines the features of the fictional space, fictional creatures, magical and pseudo-magical objects, the theme of post-mortality, and the role of humans in worlds created by authors.

In the *conclusion*, the main findings of the research are presented.

Main findings. Three articles on the topic of the dissertation have been published in journals recommended by the Higher Attestation Commission. The dissertation branched into three articles published in issues recommended by the Higher Attestation

Commission. The paper "On the question of anti-utopia and dystopia"¹¹ considers issues of terminology and classification of genre novels that scholars face when researching the topic. In the present work, this issue is raised in paragraphs 1.1, 1.4, and 1.5. The article "Transformation of functions of the book as a carrier of collective and individual memory in dystopia"¹² correlates with paragraph 2.4 of the present thesis. The author explores the image and function of the book in dystopia and arrives at the conclusion that the book in dystopic novels partially loses its original function as a vehicle of preservation and transmission of memory to posterity. The third paper¹³ offers an analysis of the novel "Shchast'e" from the perspective of space and the topic of the afterlife (paragraph 3.1 and 3.2).

The dissertation puts forward the following **propositions for defense**:

1. The loss and substitution of historical and collective memory is an important characteristic of 21st-century dystopian novels, continuing some trends from 20th-century works.

2. The memory of characters inhabiting the world of dystopia is not always subject to falsification and destruction: Often, memory loss occurs naturally, analogous to processes of forgetting in the real world; this is particularly characteristic of depicting the aftermath of large-scale catastrophes.

3. The collective memory of the event (catastrophe) that gave rise to the dystopian world is often absent or fragmentary in protagonists of contemporary dystopias.

4. A key feature of 21st-century dystopias, bringing them closer to postmodernist literature, is the portrayal of syncretic mixing of different past epochs in a single future.

¹¹ Reutova M.A. On the question of anti-utopia and dystopia // Modern Humanities Success. 2023. № 5. P. 25–31.

¹² Reutova M.A. Transformation of functions of the book as a carrier of collective and individual memory in dystopia // Vestnik Chuvashskogo gosudarstvennogo pedagogicheskogo universiteta im. I. Y. Yakovleva. Cheboksary, 2022. № 3 (116). P. 113–119;

¹³ Reutova M.A. Literary analysis of dystopia: on the example of the theme of afterlife in Figl-Migl's novel "Happiness" // Sovremennoe pedagogicheskoe obrazovanie. M., 2023. № 7. P. 281–284.

5. The mixing of epochs depicted in dystopia is a consequence of the partial loss of historical memory and the expression of the impossibility of creating a fundamentally new social order.

6. In dystopias describing events far removed from the time of writing the novel, there is a tendency to create a new (fictional) layer of historical memory or an alternative history.

7. The extermination of books, historical monuments, and literate people is a common feature of dystopia, originating in 20th-century literature. A trend of the 21st century is the emergence of new memory carriers and the disappearance of the book's function of storing and transmitting information.

8. Dystopia actively uses elements inherent to other genres, such as science fiction, fantasy, horror and fairy tale. The genre borrows fantastical (unreal) creatures, scientific technologies, magical objects, and so on.

Chapter 1. The dystopian genre and its correlation with the category of fictional time and the problem of memory

§ 1.1. A brief history of the genre: from its origins to the present day

Utopia is "a literary genre based on the image of a non-existent ideal society"¹⁴; "a work depicting a fiction, a pipe dream"¹⁵; "proposing unrealistic plans for social change, used in a pejorative sense to denote something impractical, illusory, fruitless"¹⁶. One philosopher interprets utopia as "an invented political and social system that cannot be translated into reality"¹⁷. The term began to be used after the publication of Thomas More's "A truly golden little book, no less beneficial than entertaining, of a republic's best state and of the new island Utopia", in 1516. Despite the late appearance of the term, utopias existed long before this: the first of them may have appeared in ancient Greece – Plato's philosophical dialogue "The Republic", written in 360 BC. Plato tried to create an image of an ideal state in which there are three classes: philosopher-rulers, warriors and workers. The first two classes are not engaged in crafts or cultivation of the land, but devote their time to social activities for the benefit of the state. The workers do all the work as payment to the warriors (for protection) and philosophers (for peace and wise governance). From Plato's point of view, such a device would be fair.

Since utopia is an initially plotless genre in which the structure of the state is described by an outside observer, it is usually devoid of psychologism, and it is difficult for the reader to assess the feelings and emotions of the people living there. However, from the authors' point of view, the inhabitants of utopian loci are happy and they are satisfied with the existing way of life. If we analyze the structure of such states, we can see that every utopian work presented to the world was based on a strict restriction of human freedoms: caste division, ideological/religious propaganda, destruction of the institution of family, deprivation of private property, allowing slavery of "infidels", etc.

¹⁴ Lanin B.A. Utopiya // Literaturnaya enciklopediya terminov i ponyatij / pod red. A.N. Nikolyukina. M., 2001. P. 1117–1118.

¹⁵ Golovenchenko A. Utopiya // Slovar' literaturovedcheskih terminov / pod red. L.I. Timofeeva, S.V. Turaeva., 1974. P. 429–430.

¹⁶ Chertkova E.L. Utopiya. URL: https://epistemology_of_science.academic.ru (Accessed: 13.11.2020).

¹⁷ Bohem'skij Y. Sto sueverij. M., 1993. P. 158.

For example, in Plato's "Republic" we can see a division into three classes, a common life and children for soldiers, and workers are "state serfs <...> collective property of the state"¹⁸.

In connection with this factor, we will take the liberty of supplementing the definitions listed above: utopia is the ideal structure of society in the author's view. L.T. Sargent noted the need to differentiate in this case the worldview of the author and readers, because they often do not match¹⁹. Our position is also confirmed by the opinion of the philosopher Y. Bohen'skij, who wrote that utopia is mistakenly considered a positive element in the life of society, because "in world history, utopias have almost always played the most sinister role, becoming the cause of mass murder, violence and other misfortunes"²⁰. According to N.B. Yakusheva, in a utopia "it is impossible to draw the line between 'positive' and 'negative' once and for all"²¹. She considers it important to take into account both the author's intention and the reader's perception of the text.

Dystopia is formed as a genre much later than utopia. According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, the term "anti-utopia" appeared in 1910²². Scientists still have not agreed on whether dystopia is a "new branch of the utopian genre"²³ or an independent genre. There is no doubt that dystopia appeared as a reaction to utopia after the "revision of utopian ideals"²⁴. "A positive utopia can be transformed into a negative one if you approach it with a different value system"²⁵. N.B. Yakusheva identifies two types of utopias (positive and negative), with the second being born from the first. A.A. Chameev, in turn, considers negative utopia an independent genre²⁶. Along with the term "anti-utopia", there are also the concepts of "dystopia", "cacotopia", "pseudo-

¹⁸ *Trubeckoj E.N.* Politicheskie idealy Platona i Aristotelya v ih vseмирno-istoricheskom znachenii // Platon. Gosudarstvo. M., 2015. P. 10.

¹⁹ *Sargent L.T.* British and American Utopian Literature 1516-1975. Boston, 1979. P. 21.

²⁰ *Bohen'skij Yu.* Sto sueverij. M., 1993. P. 158.

²¹ *Yakusheva N.B.* Transformaciya utopii v antiutopiyu v kul'ture XX veka: dis. ... kand. filosofskih nauk: 24.00.01. Saint-Petersburg., 2001. P. 106.

²² Anti-utopia. URL: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/anti-utopia> (Accessed: 12.04.2022).

²³ *Kagarlickij Y.I.* Chto takoe fantastika? M., 1974. P. 293.

²⁴ *Chalikova V.A.* Predislovie // Utopiya i utopicheskoe myshlenie: antologiya zarubezhnoj literatury. M., 1991. P. 7.

²⁵ *Yakusheva N.B.* Op. cit. P. 105.

²⁶ *Chameev A.A.* Antiutopiya: k voprosu o termine i harakternyh chertah zhanra // Zhanr i literaturnoe napravlenie: Edinstvo i nacional'noe svoeobrazie v mirovom literaturnom processe. Vol.11. 2007.

utopia", "warning novel", "negative utopia", "inverted utopia", "satirical utopia" and others. There are still various debates regarding these concepts, and researchers may have completely different opinions. For example, V.A. Chalikova points out the significant differences between dystopia and dystopia, characterizing them through objective content: on the one hand, "today's hell, which will only continue and intensify in the future (dystopia)"²⁷, and on the other, "the myth of the future paradise and this paradise itself as hostile to the 'personality' (anti-utopia)"²⁸. We cannot agree with V.A. Chalikova regarding the use of the word "paradise" in the definition of anti-utopia, since it is difficult to call the space described in novels of this genre paradise; such an assessment is possible only in the mouth of a representative of the elite or government elite of the depicted society. V.A. Chalikova gives another definition of dystopia: "The image of a society that has overcome utopianism and, as a result, has turned into a 'bloody momentariness' devoid of memory and dreams"²⁹. N.B. Yakusheva talks about the synonymy of the concepts of dystopia and negative utopia. A.A. Chameev considers dystopia, pseudo-utopia and anti-utopia as subtypes of negative utopia. He defines dystopia as a novel about "the threat posed by 'bad utopianism' and associated precisely with the embodiment of utopia as a 'devil's vaudeville'"³⁰. As an example, the scientist cites the novel "1984" by G. Orwell (1949). Dystopia A.A. Chameev, unlike V.A. Chalikova, contrasts pseudo-utopia, which "ironically takes the form of a traditional utopia in order to expose the inconsistency of the claims of utopian ideologists"³¹. The researcher classifies the novels of Y. Zamyatin and A. Huxley as pseudo-utopias.

There is also no consensus regarding dystopia. Some believe that it is "directed not against utopia as a genre, but against utopia as an ideology (whether political or technocratic) – an ideology that arrogantly declares itself a scientific theory and claims

²⁷ Chalikova V.A. Predislovie // Utopiya i utopicheskoe myshlenie: antologiya zarubezhnoj literatury. M., 1991. P. 10.

²⁸ Ibid. P. 10.

²⁹ Ibid. P. 8.

³⁰ Chameev A.A. Antiutopiya: k voprosu o termine i harakternyh chertah zhanra // Zhanr i literaturnoe napravlenie: Edinstvo i nacional'noe svoeobrazie v mirovom literaturnom processe. Vol.11. 2007. P. 61.

³¹ Ibid. P. 61.

to radically reorganize the world"³². Others believe that dystopia presents "images of a meaningless mechanical existence in ideally organized faceless groups"³³.

Opinions differ even in the characteristics of specific novels. In Russian literary criticism, the novels "We" (1924) by Y. Zamyatin, "Brave New World" (1932) by A. Huxley and "1984" by G. Orwell are generally considered to be anti-utopias, despite their different ideological content (some modern researchers, for example, A.A. Dydrov, following A.A. Chameev, calls "1984" dystopia³⁴). At the same time, in English-language literature these novels are defined both as dystopias (A. Balasopoulos³⁵) and as anti-utopias (P. Carden, E. J. Brown³⁶), and A. Burgess classifies them as cacotopias (evil countries): "Utopias were opposed to dystopias, but both terms fall under the utopian heading. I prefer to call Orwell's imagined society a cacotopia – in the spirit of cacophony or cacodemon. Sounds worse than dystopia"³⁷.

Many authors³⁸, not classifying the novel "1984" as a anti-utopia, are guided by the fact that it contains no reference to utopian ideas. This is a rather controversial statement, since "utopia is the predecessor of totalitarianism, especially of the Marxist type"³⁹.

Thus, the point of view that anti-utopia is fundamentally opposed to utopia, and dystopia depicts a negative version of the future, is irrelevant. The latter does not lose touch with utopia and still often includes a totalitarian regime, references to

³² Chameev A.A. Antiutopiya: k voprosu o termine i harakternyh chertah zhanra // Zhanr i literaturnoe napravlenie: Edinstvo i nacional'noe svoeobrazie v mirovom literaturnom processe. Vol.11. 2007. P. 61.

³³ Chalikova V.A. Predislovie // Utopiya i utopicheskoe myshlenie: antologiya zarubezhnoj literatury. M., 1991. P. 7.

³⁴ Dydrov A.A. Chelovek budushchego v utopiyah i distopiyah: filosofsko-antropologicheskaya interpretaciya: avtoref. dis. ... kand. filosofskih nauk: 09.00.13. Chelyabinsk, 2011. 27 p.

³⁵ Balasopoulos A. Anti-Utopia and Dystopia: Rethinking the Generic Field // Utopia Project Archive. Athens, 2011. P. 59–67.

³⁶ Carden P. Utopia and Anti-Utopia: Aleksei Gastev and Evgeny Zamyatin // The Russian Review. Vol. 46. № 1. NY, 1987. P. 1–18; Brown E.J. Brave new world, 1984, and We: An essay on Anti-Utopia: (Zamyatin and English literature). NY, 1976. 61 p.

³⁷ Burgess A. 1985. M., 2015. P. 33.

³⁸ For example, Chameev A.A. Antiutopiya: k voprosu o termine i harakternyh chertah zhanra // Zhanr i literaturnoe napravlenie: Edinstvo i nacional'noe svoeobrazie v mirovom literaturnom processe. Vol.11. 2007; Dydrov A.A. Chelovek budushchego v utopiyah i distopiyah: filosofsko-antropologicheskaya interpretaciya: avtoref. dis. ... kand. filosofskih nauk: 09.00.13. Chelyabinsk, 2011; Balasopoulos A. Anti-Utopia and Dystopia: Rethinking the Generic Field // Utopia Project Archive. Athens, 2011.

³⁹ Claeys G. Three Variants on the Concept of Dystopia // Dystopia(n) Matters: On the Page, on Screen, on Stage. Cambridge, 2015. P. 14.

communism, the caste system, ideas of universal equality, universal rule⁴⁰, the exclusion of private property⁴¹, a world of reason without emotions and passions, etc.

Many scientists are of the opinion that such a division is not required and "the problem of distinguishing these concepts <...> has actually lost its relevance"⁴². In Russian-language studies, the term "anti-utopia" predominates, in English-language works – "dystopia", which are most often considered synonymous in their content. In this study, we do not aim to distinguish between these concepts, but adhere to the point of view that these terms are identical.

Quite often, disputes arise about the relationship between dystopia and science fiction. For example, Thomas M. Disch notes a large number of overlaps between these genres⁴³, and K. Booker, F. Pohl, D. Ketterer, L. Mumford⁴⁴ and others define dystopia as a subgenre of science fiction. In particular, K. Booker argues that "dystopian fiction can be defined as the subgenre of science fiction that uses its negative portrayal of an alternative society to stimulate new critical insights into real-world societies"⁴⁵. There is also an opposite opinion regarding this issue. K. Roemer believes that science fiction is "what could be", while dystopia is "what should not be"⁴⁶. D. Suvin and A. Aldridge⁴⁷ also divide these two concepts into two separate genres. G. Claeys, having analyzed the opinions of all supporters and opponents of this issue, concluded that, despite the fact that "dystopia becomes progressively more identified with science fiction in the twentieth century, the two genres are not identical"⁴⁸. According to B.A. Lanin, "science fiction is more likely to focus on the search for other worlds, the modeling of a different

⁴⁰ The notion by S.T. Kolridzh: pantisocracy (*Virolajnen M.N.* Russkij romantizm v proekcii na evropejskuyu romanticheskuyu literaturu // Mir russkogo slova. № 4. 2015. P. 60).

⁴¹ The notion by S.T. Kolridzh: aspheterism (*Shahnazaryan N.M.* Filosofskaya poeziya S. T. Kolridzha / Nauch. red.. L.V. Sidorchenko. Minsk, 2020. P. 39).

⁴² *Smirnov A.Y.* Russkaya literaturnaya antiutopiya rubezha 20–21 vv. (problema tipologii) // Vesnik BDU. Serya 4, Filalogiya. Zhurnalistyka. Pedagogika. 2006. № 3. P. 30.

⁴³ *Disch Thomas M.* Buck Rogers in the New Jerusalem // America as Utopia. NY, 1981. P. 52.

⁴⁴ *Booker M.K.* Critical Insights: Dystopia. NY, 2012; *Pohl F.* The Politics of Prophecy // Political Science Fiction. Columbia, 1997. P. 7; *Ketterer D.* New Worlds for Old: The Apocalyptic Imagination, Science Fiction, and American Literature. Norwell, 1974. P. 102, 125; *Mumford L.* The Myth of the Machine, vol. 2: The Pentagon of Power. London, 1974. P. 220.

⁴⁵ *Booker M.K.* Op. cit. P. 5.

⁴⁶ *Roemer K.* America as Utopia. NY, 1981. P. 6–7.

⁴⁷ *Suvin D.* Metamorphoses of Science Fiction: On the Poetics and History of a Literary Genre. Bern, 2016. P. 83; *Aldridge A.* The Scientific World-View in Dystopia. Ann Arbor (MI), 1984. P. 15–17.

⁴⁸ *Claeys G.* Dystopia: A Natural History. Oxford, 2017. P. 289.

reality, a different 'reality'. The dystopian world is more recognizable and easier to predict"⁴⁹. As one of the arguments against defining dystopia as a subgenre, one can point out that both of these literary movements are relatively young and have many intertwinings with others. Moreover, it can be argued that these genres are characterized by varying degrees of realism of the image, the presence of politics and science (scientific achievements), as well as the influence of the latter on humanity.

In connection with the above facts, in this study we consider dystopia as an independent literary genre, different from utopia (Shishkina, Lanin) and science fiction (Suvin, Aldridge, Claeys, Lanin).

The theory of utopia and dystopia is extremely controversial and ambiguous. At the center of the debate, in addition to terminology, are the origins of dystopia, the time of birth of this genre, the list of works with utopian or dystopian motifs and symbols, as well as their boundaries. According to some scientists, dystopia is a fairly young genre (XVIII - XX centuries⁵⁰), according to others, its tradition goes back more than 2500 years, and "dystopian motifs have not yet formed into an independent genre", according to, for example, Shishkina, – "can be found already in Plato's 'Republic'"⁵¹. As was said earlier, this work is also included in the list of utopian works.

Dystopia became widespread only in the 20th century. The reason for the genre "boom" is most often seen "either in scientific and technological progress, or in socio-political contradictions"⁵². Many believe that the powerful impetus for the development of this genre was the world wars, which proved the presence of the negative side of technological progress and showed the process of dehumanization of people. It is believed that "classical utopias were born on the basis of artistic modeling of socio-

⁴⁹ Lanin B.A. Russkaya literaturnaya antiutopiya XX v.: dis. ... d-ra. fil. nauk: 10.01.02. M., 1993. P. 5.

⁵⁰ V.A. Chalikova (*Chalikova V.A. Predislovie // Utopiya i utopicheskoe myshlenie: antologiya zarubezhnoj literatury*. M., 1991. P. 10.) и A. Balasopoulos (*Balasopoulos A. Anti-Utopia and Dystopia: Rethinking the Generic Field // Utopia Project Archive*. Athens, 2011.) are of the opinion that already in the novels of the 18th century there are features of dystopia, as a fully formed genre; A.A. Chameev considers the beginning exclusively of the 20th century (*Chameev A.A. Antiutopiya: k voprosu o termine i harakternyh chertah zhanra // Zhanr i literaturnoe napravlenie: Edinstvo i nacional'noe svoeobrazie v mirovom literaturnom processe*. Vol.11. 2007.).

⁵¹ Shishkina S.G. Literaturnaya antiutopiya: k voprosu o granicah zhanra // Vestnik gumanitarnogo fakul'teta IGHTU. 2007. P. 200.

⁵² Yakusheva N.B. Transformaciya utopii v antiutopiyu v kul'ture XX veka: dis. ... kand. filosofskih nauk: 24.00.01. SPb., 2001. P. 99.

philosophical theories; dystopias started from already realized theoretical postulates"⁵³, speaking against the mythical paradise of dystopia, pointing to modern problems of society, the world and politics, dystopia used as its basis what humanity had already seen, and raised it to the degree of a negative absolute.

It was in the 20th century that novels appeared, generated by the above reasons, which are considered the founders of the dystopian genre: "We" by Zamyatin, "Brave New World" by A. Huxley and "1984" by G. Orwell.

§ 1.2. Russian dystopia

A common mistake is the idea that Russian literary dystopia began with the novel "We" by E.I. Zamyatin in the 20th century. In fact, as shown by B.A. Lanin in his academic dissertation, the formation of the genre began much earlier. The scientist describes in detail the development of this genre in Russian literature. The first Russian dystopian work, in his opinion, was the story by M.M. Kheraskov "Kadm and Harmony" (1789); the genre further developed in the stories of V.F. Odoyevsky's "Gorod bez imeni (A city without a name)" (1839) and "Poslednee ubijstvo (The Last Murder)" (1840). During the first third of the 20th century, our country experienced strong upheavals: the Russo-Japanese War, Bloody Sunday, the 1905 Revolution, the First World War, two revolutions, the Civil War, the New Economic Policy, the creation of the USSR, and so on. Already during this period, dystopia was represented by various types of literary forms: novel, drama, stories, short stories and parables. An example is the philosophical work of V.S. Solovyov "Three Conversations" (1900), story by V.Y. Bryusov "The Republic of the Southern Cross" (1905), story by N.D. Fedorov "One Evening in 2217" (1906), novel by Iv. Morskoy "Anarhisty budushchego (Anarchists of the Future)", story by A.I. Kuprin's "Korolevskij park (Royal Park)" (1911), the stories "Gibel' glavnogo goroda (The Death of the Main City)" (1918) and "Rasskaz ob Ake i chelovechestve (The Story of Aka and Humanity)" (1919)

⁵³ *Shishkina S.G.* Literaturnaya antiutopiya: k voprosu o granicah zhanra // Vestnik gumanitarnogo fakul'teta IGHTU. 2007. P. 201.

by E.D. Zozulya, story by S.D. Krzhizhanovsky "Klub ubijc bukiv (The Letter Killers Club)" (1927) and others.

It was during this period that E.I. Zamyatin writes the novel "We", which is considered the first "classical" dystopia, which marked "the beginning of the development of dystopia in world literature of the 20th century"⁵⁴. In the USSR, for ideological reasons, the work was prohibited from publication, but in the West it gained sufficient popularity. "We" anticipates the appearance of the novels "Brave New World" and "1984", and G. Orwell, after reading it (before the publication of his novel), publishes a review in which he notes that "Aldous Huxley's novel 'Brave New World', apparently, partly owes its appearance to this book <...> the similarity with the novel 'Brave New World' is striking"⁵⁵. Both G. Orwell and Russian researchers, for example A. Voronskij⁵⁶, believe that Zamyatin did not write about Soviet rule or communism, his generalizations were broader.

In the 1930s–1950s, "fanatical glorification of the revolution" was in demand, and therefore there was a "deactivation of dystopia in Soviet literature"⁵⁷. However, during this period A.P. Platonov writes the novel "Chevengur" and the story "The Foundation Pit" (1930), but they will be published after the author's death. The genre of these works gives rise to numerous disputes: they

considered as a story, menippea, philosophical novel, ideological novel, tragic utopia, folk epic, dystopia; indicate the interaction of utopian and dystopian tendencies in one genre structure⁵⁸.

In these texts, Platonov responds to the first five-year plan for the development of the national economy of the USSR and collectivization. At the same time, a completely

⁵⁴ Dolgina E.S. Problemy kul'tury v russkoj literaturnoj utopii XIX—XX vekov: Monografiya. Nizhnevartovsk, 2009. P. 46.

⁵⁵ Orwell G. Review of "We" by E. I. Zamyatin // George Orwell: "Skotnyj Dvor: Skazka" Esse. Stat'i. Recenzii. M., 1989. P. 132–133.

⁵⁶ Voronskij A. Literaturnye siluety. III. Evgenij Zamyatin // Krasnaya nov'. 1922. № 6. P. 319.

⁵⁷ Vorob'eva A.N. Russkaya antiutopiya 20 – nachala 21 vekov v kontekste mirovoj antiutopii: avtoref. dis. ... d-ra. fil. nauk: 10.01.01. Saratov, 2009. P. 9.

⁵⁸ Yaroshenko L.V. Zhanr romana-mifa v tvorchestve A. Platonova: monografiya. Grodno, 2004. P. 3.

different work appeared – the novel by V.V. Nabokov "Invitation to a Beheading" (1935), which, nevertheless, "on formal grounds belongs to the dystopian genre, to novels warning about the dangers of totalitarianism"⁵⁹.

The "revival" of the genre occurred in the 1960s. At this time, dystopia is "already a 'tool' for analyzing the past and present of the country in the context of pressing issues of our time"⁶⁰. Many writers, such as Y.M. Daniel, V.P. Aksyonov, V.N. Voinovich, the Strugatsky brothers write dystopias and model situations of overcoming a totalitarian system and the consequences of this transition.

The end of the 20th century is associated with various socio-political factors: the long Cold War (1947–1991), the threat of nuclear war, restructuring (1985–1991), the accident at the Chernobyl disaster (1986), the collapse of the USSR (1991) and other factors unfavorable for positive perception world of events. B.A. Lanin notes that in the 1980s–1990s

The main content <...> of Russian dystopia was the premonition of collapse. For some, this era became a huge personal tragedy, for others - the collapse of the "evil empire", "prison of nations", "Kremlin empire" and so on. <...> After all, the "disintegration" of a state is not just a redrawing of borders and a "restructuring" of socio-political and economic relations. First of all, the writers saw here a tragedy of personality⁶¹.

I.D. Lukashionok supports this point of view and clarifies: "The conflict between the individual and the 'state machine' at this time takes on an existential resonance"⁶². The crisis of Soviet ideology, people's disillusionment with the state and freedom of speech open up new opportunities for writers. This is manifested in the story by L. Petrushevskaya "Novye robinzony (The New Robinson Crusoes)" (1989), the story by A. Kabakov "Nevozvrashchenets (The Defector)" (1989), the story by V. Makanin

⁵⁹ Dolinin A.A. Kak chitat' "Priglasenie na kazn". URL: <https://arzamas.academy/materials/1616> (Accessed: 13.10.20).

⁶⁰ Lukashionok I.D. Antiutopian Discourse of the Russian Culture at the beginning of the XXI-st century. 2010. № 4. Vol.1. P. 287.

⁶¹ Lanin B.A. Russkaya literaturnaya antiutopiya XX v.: dis. ... d-ra. fil. nauk: 10.01.02. M., 1993. P. 193.

⁶² Lukashionok I.D. Op. cit. Vol.1. P. 287.

"Syur v Proletarskom rajone (Sur in the Proletarsky District)" (1991), in the novel by V. Pelevin "Omon Ra" (1991). The listed works also describe a person's escape from society, from the state or any other form of authority.

Dystopias of the 21st century reflect important themes for modern society: "the threat of terrorism, the expectation of a man-made disaster, distrust of the political initiatives of the current government, the internal political fragmentation of the country, its painful integration into the global economic space"⁶³. In the context of the problems raised, Russian dystopia of the 21st century has many similarities with Western works of this genre. The turn of the 20th and 21st centuries is a turning point not only for the history of Russia, but also for the history of the genre. If earlier in Russian literary dystopia the authors sought to reflect negative options for the development of utopian projects, then during this period the main theme became the survival of the heroes in terrible conditions and understanding the current situation and problems of society. Also, "in Russian utopias and dystopias of the turn of the millennium, various **national** development models are realized: Buddhist, Muslim, pseudo-liberal dictatorship, Orthodox-imperial, satirical dystopia"⁶⁴.

The 21st century in Russia is characterized by the confrontation between Russia and the West, the global economic crisis (2008), and unrest in the country. Since 2004, there has been a "boom of dystopias"⁶⁵, which was associated with the uncertainty of the further political future of Russia. The authors of works of this genre, written during this period, attempt to predict the development of events, the actions of the President of the Russian Federation and their consequences. Thus, the novels "Teplohod 'Iosif Brodskij'" (2006) by A.A. Prohanov, "2008" (2005) by S.L. Dorenko and "Media Sapiens" (2007) by S.S. Minaev give answers to the so-called "question about the third term". Other writers such as O.A. Slavnikova in the novel "2017" (2006) and N.L. Klyucharyova in the story "Rossiya: Obshchij vagon" (2006/2008) predict revolution as one of the

⁶³ *Lukashionok I.D.* Antiutopian Discourse of the Russian Culture at the beginning of the XXI-st century // *Yaroslavskij pedagogicheskij vestnik*. 2010. № 4. Vol.1. P. 286.

⁶⁴ *Lanin B.A.* Voobrazhaemaya Rossiya v sovremennoj russoj antiutopii (Imaginary Russia in Modern Russian Anti-Utopias) // *Beyond the Empire: Images of Russia in the Eurasian Cultural Context*. 2008. P. 377–384.

⁶⁵ *Stepanov A.D.* Politicheskaya antiutopiya v sovremennoj russoj literature // *Krizis utopii? Smeny epoch i ih otrazhenie v slavyanskij literaturah 20-go i 21-go stoletij*. Wiesbaden, 2016. P. 82.

possible developments. A.D. Stepanov offers an analysis of these works and comes to the conclusion that "the works that predicted a 'chaotic' future scenario turned out to be just evidence of certain sentiments in society in the mid-2000s. They were not continued and were quickly forgotten"⁶⁶. However, some of the novels written during that period took a strong position and are still popular today, for example, the novel by O. Slavnikova "2017", the trilogy "Day of the Oprichnik", "The Sugar Kremlin" and "Telluria" by V.G. Sorokin, novel "S.N.U.F.F. " (2011) by V.O. Pelevin and others. Among the features of the genre in the 21st century, one can note the interest not only in political, but also in apocalyptic themes: A. Cruz "Age of the dead" (2009), S. Cormudyan "Vtorogo shansa ne budet (There will be no second chance)" (2010–2012) and others.

§ 1.3. Foreign dystopia of the 21st century

Works of the dystopian genre are also widely represented in foreign fiction. Many of them belong to English-language writers, such as S. Collins, V. Roth, J. Dashner, L. Zumas, A. Tanner, K. Ishiguro and others, but among the popular novels you can also find authors from Germany (M.-U . Kling), Norway (M. Lunde), France (J. Lob), Japan (H. Murakami, K. Takami), China (Lao She), Korea (Choi Inho) and so on.

G. Claeys made a great contribution to the study of English-language dystopia. He believes that "from 1950 to the present, nuclear war, overpopulation, and the threat of human scientific and technological dominance have come to define an ever-changing and increasingly popular genre"⁶⁷. At the same time, the researcher notes the important role of the problem of climate change and cultural degeneration. In his opinion, the dystopia of modern times demonstrates a greater detachment of authors from the modern political situation, totalitarianism is being replaced by corporate dictatorship, and people are afraid not of collectivism, which suppresses the individual, but of the

⁶⁶ *Stepanov A.D.* Politicheskaya antiutopiya v sovremennoj russkoj literature // *Krizis utopii? Smeny epoh i ih otrazhenie v slavyanskij literaturah 20-go i 21-go stoletij*. Wiesbaden, 2016. P. 84.

⁶⁷ *Claeys G.* Three Variants on the Concept of Dystopia // *Dystopia(n) Matters: On the Page, on Screen, on Stage*. Cambridge, 2015. P. 494.

collapse of centralized state power, after which the majority will be abandoned to their fate.

According to our observations, nuclear war as a plot-forming element was most relevant in dystopias of the second half of the 20th century, and in works of the 21st century it can be found quite rarely. In modern foreign literature, the term "catastrophe" is more often used without specifying its nature, but the world described is reminiscent of the consequences of a nuclear war. Similar novels include "The Road" (2006) by C. McCarthy and "City of Ember" (2003) by J. DuPrau. Many writers do not explain in any way what exactly led to the dystopian reality. In Russian literature, nuclear war becomes the cause of a disaster, for example, in the series of novels by S. Cormudyan "Vtorogo shansa ne budet (There will be no second chance)" and E. Verkin's novel "Sakhalin Island" (2018).

The problem of robotization, the rise of artificial intelligence and the enslavement of humanity is a related topic of two genres: science fiction and dystopia. 20th century literature provides many examples of the use of this theme⁶⁸. The 21st century more often turns to film adaptations: "The Matrix" (1999–2003), the series "Love. Death & Robots" (2019 – present).

The environmental theme remains popular in our time; it is present in literature, cinema and computer games: such are the novels by M. Atwood "Year Of The Flood" (2009), N. Oreskes "The Collapse of Western Civilization: A View from the Future" (2014), the film "After Earth" (2013), game "Endling" (2022).

Due to the fact that modern dystopia is mainly interested in teenagers, one can note a tendency towards a convergence in the ages of the main character and the reader. Thus, the heroes of "The Maze Runner" (2009–2011) are from 12 to 18 years old, at the beginning of Didier Van Cauwelaert's trilogy "Thomas Drimm" the main character is 12 years old, in the novel "The Shadows of Radovar" by M. Morshuis – 14 years old, in "The Hunger Games" S. Collins – 16 years old, in "Divergent" V. Roth – 16 years old and so on.

⁶⁸ K. Čapek 's play "Rossum's Universal Robots" (1920), "Utopia 14" by K. Vonnegut, "Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?" (1968) P. Dick.

We can note another emerging trend – the creation of a dystopian world in which people are deprived of any feelings or emotions. "The Giver" (1993) by L. Lowry, "Divergent" by V. Roth, and "Delirium" (2011) by L. Oliver are based on a similar plot.

Among the leading ideas of English dystopia, identified by G. Klyce, in our opinion, the uprising of artificial intelligence, environmental problems remain popular, and nuclear war is being replaced by the vague term "catastrophe". Among the most famous works of this genre are post-apocalyptic works, in which the themes of totalitarianism and corporate dictatorship are frequent. Russian-speaking authors often rely on Western literature in choosing the theme of the novel and leading plots, but they are also based on the peculiarities of Russian culture and history, which gives these novels originality. Similar to foreign texts, the problem of introducing robots into human life, artificial intelligence, chips and control of the brain, thoughts and feelings appears at the center of the authors' thoughts⁶⁹. In the dystopias of Russian writers we more often encounter nuclear war, political themes and irony regarding modern social movements and trends⁷⁰.

§ 1.4. Genre features of dystopia

In Russian science, numerous attempts have been made to determine the genre characteristics of dystopia, but consensus in this area of research has not yet been achieved. So, B.A. Lanin identifies 11 signs of dystopia as a genre, L.M. Yur'eva offers ten others: despite the similar number of characteristics they highlight, their lists are fundamentally different. Let's try to combine their conclusions.

The leading feature of dystopia B.A. Lanin considers "a dispute with utopia or with a utopian plan"⁷¹. The researcher himself notes that this dispute may not be with a "specific utopia" or a "specific author"⁷². In our opinion, this opposition may not lie in

⁶⁹ V. Pelevin often uses these themes in many of his novels, robots and technology are found in Sorokin's works, A. Polyarinov in "Tsentri tiazhesti (Center of Gravity)" (2018) raises the issue of cybersecurity.

⁷⁰ K. Dobrotvorskaya and Y. Yakovleva in the novel "Muzhchina aprelya (April Man)" (2021) raise themes of racial and universal equality, the ideality of the human body, and the cult of Greta Thunberg. Pelevin in "Transhumanism Inc." "gender appropriation" is mentioned.

⁷¹ Lanin B.A. Anatomiya literaturnoj antiutopii // Obshchestvennyye nauki i sovremennost'. 1993. № 5. P. 154.

⁷² Ibid. P. 154.

the ideological basis of the work, as, for example, in the novels "We", "Brave New World" and "1984", where this "dispute" can be called plot-forming. This opposition can be manifested in details: for example, in the presence of anthropocentrism, the depiction of a totalitarian regime and the ritualization of life.

Utopia is built around the problems of society, the state structure, it does not consider the personal attitude to the described world order and the feelings of ordinary residents important, turning them into a faceless crowd, therefore "utopia is sociocentric"⁷³. At the same time, in dystopia the narrative is told from the perspective of a hero who is not a representative of the ruling class and is dissatisfied with the established order, and therefore we believe that "dystopia is personalistic"⁷⁴ and "anthropocentric"⁷⁵.

The totalitarian regime that dominates the world of dystopia is an integral part of the genre and clearly has its origins in T. More's "Utopia". However, if in utopias this political regime is shown from the positive side, from the point of view of the state structure, then in dystopias its most negative manifestations are usually depicted.

The ritualization of life is also an element that "argues" with the utopian genre. In a utopia, "ritual reigns", and "chaotic movement of the individual"⁷⁶ is impossible there. Dystopia duplicates this feature of utopia, but the hero's refusal to take part in the ritual causes conflict and creates a threat to his life.

For society, in addition to its unification, an important feature is the division of people into groups or castes, which allows them to be classified: divided into "elite" and "scum", "worthy" and "unworthy". This distinction resonates with the space of dystopia, which will be discussed in more detail later.

The personality of the protagonist of dystopia also becomes an important feature of the genre and an object of research. For example, A.A. Kabirova comes to the conclusion that the hero is "a strong, independent person who goes against the system,

⁷³ Galceva R., *Rodnyanskaya I. Pomekha – chelovek. Opyt veka v zerkale antiutopij* // *Novyj mir*. M., 1988. № 12. P. 220.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.* P. 220.

⁷⁵ Lanin B.A. *Anatomiya literaturnoj antiutopii* // *Obshchestvennye nauki i sovremennost'*. 1993. № 5. P. 158.

⁷⁶ Lanin B.A. *Russkaya literaturnaya antiutopiya XX v.: dis. ... d-ra. fil. nauk: 10.01.02. M., 1993. P. 157.*

disrupts the usual course of affairs"⁷⁷. This statement is true for most modern dystopias, both domestic and foreign. One of the main themes of such works of the 21st century is the chosenness of the protagonist, who is led by providence itself.

L.M. Yur'eva notes two types of heroes "rebel[ing] against the existing system"⁷⁸: firstly, these are people "proud and adamant, sacrificing themselves, but not changing their convictions"⁷⁹, and secondly, "those who show criticism and dissatisfaction, but do not have strength to go to the end"⁸⁰. She also notes that the focus may be on "collective protest", "rebellion"⁸¹. Another feature of the hero of a dystopia can be called the fact that he turns out to be "a member of the people", from a number of people who are initially faceless like himself. Sometimes, to enhance this effect, in novels of this genre people are given numbers instead of names, such as D-503, I-330 ("We"), 717 ("Future"), 0-11 (O. Sentsov "Numbers" (2011)). It is also worth remembering the characters Shch-854 and Yu-81 from the story "One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich" by A. Solzhenitsyn. The author describes a real historical precedent: in special Gulag camps, prisoners were given numbers instead of names.

In dystopias of the 20th century, the hero could not "break" the system, but the system subjugated and "broke" the hero: "the hero's collision with the system ends tragically for him – either death, or complete integration into the system and, as a consequence, moral and physical degradation"⁸². Even if the author gave hope for the possibility of a different outcome, the result was the same, the political system or the attitudes of society were unchanged. For example, the main character of the novel "1984" lost himself after being tortured in the Ministry of Love and stopped fighting for his beliefs, "no longer ran and shouted with the crowd. <...> the fight is over. He gained victory over himself. He loved Big Brother"⁸³. Savage John in "Brave New World" understands the impossibility of breaking the system and commits suicide. D-503 from

⁷⁷ *Kabirova A.A.* Model of the world in western and Russian modern dystopia: vypusknaya kvalifikacionnaya rabota. Ekaterinburg, 2018. P. 40.

⁷⁸ *Yur'eva L.M.* Russkaya antiutopiya v kontekste mirovoj literatury. M., 2005. P. 74.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ *Ibid.* P. 75.

⁸² *Ibid.* P. 74–75.

⁸³ *Orwell G.* 1984 / trans. V. Golyishev, L. Bespalova. M., 2014. P. 265.

Zamyatin's novel "We" undergoes surgery and betrays the cause for which he fought. Both heroes also betray the women they love. Such heroes did not lead the resistance, were one of many who wanted to change the world, and in the end lost themselves or their lives.

If we consider the still popular trilogy of films "The Matrix" (1999–2003), we see a character close to modern dystopian heroes: Neo is the "Chosen One" predicted by the prophetess, an initially unremarkable IT worker and hacker who becomes a superhero and must destroy the Matrix, the illusory world of a computer program that contains the consciousness of all people on the planet. Human bodies are used by the machines that have taken over the world as sources of energy to maintain their own existence. At the end of the trilogy, Neo meets with the Architect, the creator of the program, who says that such a Chosen One and a city of people free from illusion are born in history not for the first time and are just an error in the algorithm he developed, which is regularly eliminated by the system. However, contrary to the Architect's prediction, Neo saves the free city at the cost of his own life. In this case, the reader feels the hope of the heroes for a completely positive outcome and the opportunity to return all people to reality, free them from the oppression of machines, but in the finale everything remains the same, and the main character dies.

In 2021, the fourth film was released, which was made by only one of the two directors of the trilogy and is not recognized as "canonical" by most fans. In the movie, filmed almost 20 years later, Neo is resurrected and placed back into the Matrix. This example perfectly illustrates the authors' desire to preserve the life of the main character.

The famous trilogies of the beginning of the 21st century "The Hunger Games" (2008–2010) by S. Collins and "Divergent" (2011–2013) by V. Roth are striking examples of dystopias of the 21st century. The peculiarity of the main characters of these works is that they become the face of the revolution, the main ideological engine that ultimately breaks the accepted system. In the fictional world of "Divergent", there are four castes (factions) in the city: after birth, children live with their families in their "native" faction, but when they reach the age of sixteen, at the Choice Ceremony they

must make an informed choice and either stay with their relatives or move to another faction. After the shift, communication with blood relatives is not encouraged, which is supported by the slogan "faction before blood". The main character questions the accepted rule: "We belong to our factions more than to our families. Is it correct?"⁸⁴, and dies at the end of the story, sacrificing himself for his brother. Thus, even in the face of death, she does not give up the values for which she fought. The world of "The Hunger Games" also presents a state in which there is a strict division between high and low, poor and rich. The described country consists of twelve cities (districts) and the capital, the Capitol. The closer a district is to the Capitol, the richer and more privileged its inhabitants are. It is not possible to move to another city. The main character unwittingly becomes the face of the revolution, and after the system is broken, she finds herself expelled to her home on the outskirts of the ruins of her hometown. Her mother and former best friend live in other cities, her sister died, her lover has partially recovered from the brainwashing: "there are still moments when he grabs the back of a chair and holds on until the flashes of the horror he experienced pass"⁸⁵, and she herself is tormented by all the horror of the past: "I wake up screaming from nightmares"⁸⁶.

The authors of the 21st century dystopias described above allow the hero to become a leader, lead an uprising, and, in some situations, "break" the system. However, the battle between the hero and the system still entails a negative ending for the character.

Thus, the dystopia of the 21st century gives the hero the opportunity to win, to change the social system, but the hero often comes to the desired ending as a crippled, traumatized person who is not able to build something new, pure and truly enjoy it. However, there is a tendency: to keep the character alive.

The next important feature of dystopia is pseudo-carnival⁸⁷, which is based on absolute fear (fear of the state, social system, fear of the uncertainty of the future, and so

⁸⁴ Roth V. *Divergent* / trans. A.S. Kilanova. M., 2011. P. 22.

⁸⁵ Collins S. *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay*. M., 2011. P. 668.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ According to M.M. Bakhtin, carnival is a temporary phenomenon in which everything is based on laughter and which frees a person from existing rules. In contrast to this phenomenon, the pseudo-carnival is permanent in nature and "does not create a 'second life' or free a person from the clutches of the existing order. It, as a slow-motion model of established

on). The pseudo-carnival successfully uses standard carnival elements, such as the principle of an attraction, such heroes as the jester, the rogue and the fool (their presence is not required, but it does occur).

Dystopia also has a prognostic function (extrapolation). The futurological component of dystopia is certainly important in works of the genre. Many authors were frightened by the fact that their predictions were coming true. For example, in "Brave New World Revisited", O. Huxley (1958) writes: "The prophecies made in 1931 were fulfilled much earlier than I could have expected. <...> The nightmare of a total organization <...> awaits us around the next corner"⁸⁸. The predicted paths for the development of civilization are quite contradictory, but negative scenarios prevail, which is actively used by the authors of dystopian novels. Among such "predictions" are nuclear war; wars within states leading to their collapse; environmental disaster; biological disaster; overpopulation of the Earth; rise of the machines and others. Such options for the development of events are not without validity: all processes occurring in modern reality, under certain circumstances, can lead to one of the listed endings.

There are a number of other features of this genre associated with the chronotope. The temporal and spatial characteristics of dystopia will be discussed later.

§ 1.5. Typology of dystopia

The issue of typologizing dystopia is extremely difficult and controversial. Some researchers have attempted to create a classification of dystopia, but due to different interpretations of the term, the constant development of the young genre, and the introduction of elements of other genres into it, this turned out to be a practically unattainable goal.

So, S.F. Denisov and L.V. Denisova create their own typology based on changes in the content of works of this genre and identify three types of dystopia: classical, *non-classical* and *post-non-classical*. Their classification is based on the belief that since the

reality and the dominant ideology, strengthens the constancy of the imposed, 'dictated' truth, i.e. eternity of the existing model" (*Ratiani I. Psevdkarnaval'nyj tekst – forma mezhdunarodnogo dialoga // Materialy mezhdunarodnogo kongressa "Russkaya literatura v mirovom kul'turnom i obrazovatel'nom prostranstve". SPb., 2008. P. 210).*

⁸⁸ *Huxley A. Brave New World Revisited / trans. from eng. A.Anvaera. M., 2022. P. 7–8.*

middle of the 18th century (since the first technological revolution), humanity has gone through three main stages of development, each of which was provoked by a new "breakthrough" and, according to the authors, destructive technology.

Classic dystopia, according to the authors of the article, arises on the basis of the first technological revolution of the 18th century, which "can be called machine"⁸⁹. Works of this type are based on the invention of the conveyor belt by H. Ford and the control theory of F.W. Taylor. The conveyor belt forms the basis of the "production" of people in the novel "Brave New World" by A. Huxley.

The Taylor system demonstrated its effectiveness in industrial conveyor production and was extended to other areas of human activity. As a result, a society like a Machine is formed. Taylor's empirical concept replaces philosophy in such a society⁹⁰.

As an example, the authors cite "We" by Zamyatin and "1984" by G. Orwell.

The era of *non-classical* dystopia begins in the middle of the 20th century and is based on automation and informatization of production, which entail robotization. Examples of this type are the novels by H. Heinrich "Mozg-gigant (The Giant Brain)" (1965), A.D. Foster's "Terminator: Salvation" (2009) and H. Wilson's "Robocalypse" (2011).

Post-non-classical dystopia comes to replace non-classical dystopia at the end of the 20th century. It comes from the concept of convergent or nano-bio-info-cognitive technologies (NBIC)⁹¹. As an example, researchers cite "Schismatrix" (1985) by B. Sterling, "Ribofunk" (1996) by P. Filippo, "The Possibility of an Island" (2005) by M. Houellebecq.

The authors of the article come to the conclusion that the number of technologies on which dystopias are based is constantly growing. The scientific directions underlying

⁸⁹ Denisov S.F., Denisova L.V. Fiction dystopia: typology and philosophical-anthropological senses // Vestnik CHelGU. Chelyabinsk, 2017. № 7 (403). P. 19.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Danilin I.V. Convergent (NBIC) technologies: problems of development and transformational potential // Vestnik RUDN. International relations. M., 2017. P. 555.

them are also changing: mechanics, cybernetics and synergetics. With the development of the genre, the position of man and humanity changes. At the classical stage, a person is metaphorically likened to a mechanism, a machine; in non-classical language, the authors indicate the advantages of robots over humans and the weakness of the latter. "The basis of post-non-classical dystopias is the idea that, despite the development of high technologies, human consciousness has remained unchanged. This has made the world more dangerous than before"⁹². However, in all three types of dystopia in this classification, "unified philosophical and anthropological meanings are found: all dystopias are a story about the death of a person, his death"⁹³.

There are more detailed classifications of dystopias in world literature. For example, F. Polak's⁹⁴ typology is based on identifying the leading idea in the novels of the genre: various utopian ideas and opposition to them, the problems of modern society and their aggravation or unsuccessful attempts to solve them, cataclysms, catastrophes or the presence of science fiction and politics.

A. Balasopoulos divides novels of this genre into two blocks: dystopia and dystopia. This classification does not satisfy the goals of our research, since, firstly, A. Balasopoulos includes in his classification not only literary, but also scientific and popular science texts. Secondly, he separates the concepts of anti-utopia and dystopia and classifies the novel "1984" as a dystopia, which contradicts our considerations expressed above. Thirdly, A. Balasopoulos himself often notes in the article that one singled out group may be part of a larger group described by him and that many elements of his classification are closely intertwined with each other.

S.S. Brega, in turn, offers a more extensive typology and identifies the grounds on which dystopias can be classified "according to their impact on various spheres of society: political, economic ('Confessions of an Economic Hit Man' by J. Perkins), social ('Future Shock' by A. Toffler), spiritual (destructive religious cults)"⁹⁵; "on an

⁹² Denisov S.F., Denisova L.V. Fiction dystopia: typology and philosophical-anthropological senses // Vestnik CHelGU. Chelyabinsk, 2017. № 7 (403). P. 23.

⁹³ Ibid. P. 24.

⁹⁴ Polak F. The Image of the Future. NY., 1973. 320 p.

⁹⁵ Brega S.S. Fenomen antiutopii v social'nyh praktikah sovremennosti: social'no-filosofskij analiz: dis. ... kand. fil. nauk: 09.00.11. M., 2010. P. 98.

ideological basis: communist ('1984' by G. Orwell), liberal democratic ('Brave New World' by A. Huxley), fascist ('The Iron Heel' by J. London), postmodernist (the film 'Johnny Mnemonic' by R. Longo, based on the story by W. Gibson)⁹⁶; "aimed at specific social problems: dystopia, cacotopia, practopia⁹⁷, eco-utopia, anti-dystopia, post-dystopia, 'dark future' dystopia, eschatological dystopia, post-apocalyptic dystopia, bestiary dystopia, cyberpunk, etc."⁹⁸.

But even this painstaking division is not sufficiently precise and comprehensive. Thus, the "Transhumanism Inc." by V. Pelevin combines the features of eco-utopia and cyberpunk. Shchast'e (Happiness) by Figl'-Migl' can be classified as eco-utopia, dystopia, post-apocalyptic and eschatological dystopia.

Also, it should be noted that S.S. Brega defines post-dystopia as "an dystopia that has a happy ending"⁹⁹. The concept of a "happy ending" is not commented on by the researcher in any way, which leaves room for interpretation. In "The Hunger Games", the system was destroyed, which can be interpreted as a happy ending, despite the huge number of deaths due to the war. In "1984", the main character remained alive, but could have died under torture. For some recipients, such an ending can also be interpreted as happy. From a similar point of view, any of the above dystopias can be classified as post-dystopia.

Russian dystopia is also subject to analysis and attempts at structuring. I.D. Lukashionok offers a classification of Russian dystopian novels of the first decade of the 21st century, which is based on the model of the world they reproduce. He distinguishes four types: *apocalyptic*, *satirical*, *analytical*, *revolutionary*.

Apocalyptic dystopia focuses on "destructive trends in the development of Russian society" and "develops a scenario of 'life after a catastrophe'"¹⁰⁰. As examples

⁹⁶ Brega S.S. Fenomen antiutopii v social'nyh praktikah sovremennosti: social'no-filosofskij analiz: dis. ... kand. fil. nauk: 09.00.11. M., 2010. P. 98-99.

⁹⁷ "Practopia is a social development project that aspires to practical implementation. Practopia is a cross between utopia and dystopia (transitional type), not the best and not the worst of possible worlds, but a practical world and more favorable for the person in which we live" (Ibid. P. 100). As an example, the author cites the novel "The Third Wave" by A. Toffler.

⁹⁸ Ibid. P. 99.

⁹⁹ Ibid. P. 101.

¹⁰⁰ Lukashionok I.D. Antiutopian Discourse of the Russian Culture at the beginning of the XXI-st century // Yaroslavskij pedagogicheskij vestnik. 2010. № 4. Vol.1. P. 287.

of this type, the author cites the novels by A. Fomin's "Atipichnaya pnevmoniya (Atypical Pneumonia)" (2017).

The satirical dystopia rethinks modern reality and strives to expose the vices of society, using "political satire and social sarcasm"¹⁰¹. Characters often use "potent drugs" as tools of cognition. The author includes "Day of the Oprichnik" by V. Sorokin, "2008" by S. Dorenko, "Soulless" by S. Minaev (2006), "Numbers" by V. Pelevin (2003) and others.

Analytical dystopia offers a detailed depiction of many problems of modern Russia (including social, economic, political), but does not attempt to solve them, but encourages the reader to analyze current events and their "possible fatal consequences"¹⁰². Examples of this type are "Textbook of Drawing" by M. Kantor (2006), "Styd (Shame)" by V. Strogalshchikov (2006).

Revolutionary dystopia, last in order but not least in this classification, considers revolution as the only way to resolve modern contradictions and offers various options for the development of events. The author cites as examples the works of A. Volos "Maskaw Mecca", O. Slavnikova "2017" and Z. Prilepin "Sankya".

The last of the classifications we have given is the narrowest and most suitable for the material of our research, since Russian literary dystopias will be analyzed. Despite this, other broader typologies cannot be completely ignored.

§ 1.6. Chronotope of dystopia

Interest in the categories of time and space appeared at the dawn of science, but special interest in literary criticism arose after the publication of the work of M.M. Bakhtin "Forms of time and chronotope in the novel"¹⁰³, in which he introduced the concept of *chronotope*. M.M. Bakhtin understands it as a "formal-substantive category of literature"¹⁰⁴, reflecting "the merging of spatial and temporal signs in a

¹⁰¹ Lukashionok I.D. Antiutopian Discourse of the Russian Culture at the beginning of the XXI-st century // Yaroslavskij pedagogicheskiy vestnik. 2010. № 4. Vol.1. P. 287.

¹⁰² Ibid. P. 288.

¹⁰³ Bakhtin M.M. Questions of Literature and Aesthetics. M., 1975.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. P. 235.

meaningful and concrete whole"¹⁰⁵. He also defines the main characteristics of the chronotope, including the ability of space to "intensify into the movement of time, plot and history", the disclosure of "signs of time in space" and the comprehension and measurement of "space by time"¹⁰⁶. M.M. Bakhtin identifies three chronotopes formed in antiquity: adventurous, adventurous-everyday and biographical. Also in his research are "point" chronotopes: threshold, road, square, living room, and so on.

The literature of modernism and postmodernism is characterized by "understanding of time, a complex interweaving of various time plans, breaking the chronological series of events, intrusion into their sequence, breaks in the narrative"¹⁰⁷. The chronotope also plays an important role in the dystopian genre.

According to M.M. Bakhtin, time and space are inseparable and "genre and genre varieties are determined precisely by the chronotope"¹⁰⁸.

Researchers have identified common specific features of artistic time and space. For example, their conventionality and discreteness¹⁰⁹, concreteness and abstractness¹¹⁰, filling/saturation with events or objects¹¹¹.

1.6.1. Fictional space

Unlike real space, artistic space can be not only single, but also fractional. The space in most works is conditional and fragmentary, since details are often absent, and only those details that are important for the author and the global meaning of the text are described in detail. Quite often, the technique of skipping some parts of the characters' long journey is used to shorten the descriptions. Space can also expand, narrow, lengthen or shorten in the perception of the hero, and, accordingly, in the understanding of the reader. The degree of conventionality of space affects its

¹⁰⁵ *Bakhtin M.M.* Questions of Literature and Aesthetics. M., 1975. P. 235.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ *Lifant'eva E.V.* Realizaciya tekstovoj kategorii retrospekcii v angloyazychnom hudozhestvennom tekste: avtoref. dis. ... kand. fil. nauk: 10.02.04. M., 2009. P. 3.

¹⁰⁸ *Bakhtin M.M.* Op. cit. P. 235.

¹⁰⁹ *Esin A.B.* Vremya i prostranstvo // Vvedenie v literaturovedenie. M., 2004. P. 182–183.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.* P. 185.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.* P. 189.

classification as concrete or abstract¹¹². The concrete "does not just 'tie' the depicted world to certain topographical realities, but actively influences the essence of what is depicted"¹¹³, and abstract space is often used "as a global generalization, a symbol" or "an expression of universal content"¹¹⁴. However, according to N.K. Jokingly, artistic space is not obliged to reproduce the properties of the real, but serves to create "a special structure that has a symbolic nature and consists of conceptual constants, the area of interpretation of which is the semantic universe of national culture"¹¹⁵.

Y.M. Lotman also notes the connection between the author's worldview and artistic space, defining the latter as "a model of the world of a given author, expressed in the language of his spatial representations"¹¹⁶. This statement very well illustrates space specifically in dystopias, because they "often resort to approximation and linear forecasting (extension of development lines outlined in the present into the future)"¹¹⁷. Thus, the space of dystopia and its content is, as a rule, the author's vision of the current picture of the world and an attempt to predict the development of the situation under certain circumstances.

In our opinion, it is necessary to clarify the specifics of the artistic space in dystopian novels. Novels of this genre quite often use a specific space, often known to readers. Thus, "dystopia considers the world in a real, but space remote in time <...> creates a world of the future that will exist many years later in a supposedly real space"¹¹⁸. The use of real toponyms helps the reader perceive events occurring in the future as close to reality: many authors of dystopias turn to this technique. It is worth noting that dystopias do not always use real objects and terrain for description, because This genre has a high world-forming ability. For some works of the genre, the real space is the Earth or even the solar system, and some describe the world of people in a

¹¹² *Esin A.B.* Vremya i prostranstvo // Vvedenie v literaturovedenie. M., 2004. P. 185.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.* P. 186.

¹¹⁵ *Shutaya N.K.* Hudozhestvennoe vremya i prostranstvo v povestvovatel'nom proizvedenii: avtoref. dis. ... kand. fil. nauk: 10.01.08. M., 1999.

¹¹⁶ *Lotman Y.M.* Izbrannye stat'i v trekh tomah. Tallin, 1992. Vol.1. P. 414.

¹¹⁷ *Stepanov A.D.* Politicheskaya antiutopiya v sovremennoj russoj literature // Krizis utopii? Smeny epoh i ih otrazhenie v slavyanskijh literaturah 20-go i 21-go stoletij. Wiesbaden, 2016. P. 81.

¹¹⁸ *Malysheva E.V.* Hudozhestvennoe prostranstvo i vremya v utopii i antiutopii // *Studia linguistica*. SPb., 2020. P. 99.

completely different universe that is not real for the current world, that is, they use a deliberately fictitious fantastic artistic space.

In a large number of works one can note the fragmentation of the space of the state. 21st century dystopias often depict a state that is divided into districts/regions/cities/districts, isolated from each other or even opposed to each other. For example, in the novel by V.G. Sorokin's "Telluria" depicts a country fragmented as a result of the war, split into separate republics, empires, principalities and kingdoms. In "Divergent" by V. Roth, there are four different factions in the city that live separately from each other and work in different areas, and in "The Hunger Games" by S. Collins, the isolation of twelve (previously thirteen) cities from each other and from the capital is not by the author explained, however, we can assume that such disunity is provoked by the ruler, following the principle of "divide and conquer".

The space of a dystopia is always closed/limited: events take place within one city or state, and the narrative rarely goes beyond its borders. L.M. Yur'eva notes that "the empires created in dystopias are fenced off from the rest of the world by an impenetrable wall"¹¹⁹. Within this limited space there is a duality. As mentioned earlier, the hero is always opposed to the state/society, which is expressed in the affirmation of intimate (individual) space, which is opposed to the transpersonal. In a dystopian world, people are often deprived of the right to intimate space: this happens, for example, in the novels "We" by Zamyatin and "1984" by G. Orwell.

1.6.2. Fictional time

Artistic space undoubtedly plays an important role in the work, however, according to M.M. Bakhtin, "in literature, the leading principle in the chronotope is time"¹²⁰. In our study we will focus on the category of artistic time. Many researchers have noted differences in the characteristics of real and artistic time. Unlike real time, which is irreversible, linear and continuous from past to future¹²¹, artistic time is

¹¹⁹ Yur'eva L.M. *Russkaya antiutopiya v kontekste mirovoj literatury*. M., 2005. P. 73.

¹²⁰ Bakhtin M.M. *Questions of Literature and Aesthetics*. M., 1975. P. 235.

¹²¹ Turaeva Z.Y. *Kategoriya vremeni: vremya grammaticheskoe i vremya hudozhestvennoe*. M., 1979. P. 219.

reversible (multidirectional) and can be interrupted. In addition, as Bakhtin noted, "time has the ability to thicken, become denser, become artistically visible"¹²², the subjective perception of time allows it to "stretch" (slow down), "run" (speed up), it can stop or flash, and events can flow in parallel, to lag behind each other or from the author or ahead of it¹²³.

Researchers identify various types of artistic time. So, for example, V.E. Halizev offers five types: "biographical" time (childhood, youth, maturity, old age), "historical" (characteristics of the change of eras and generations, major events in the life of society), "cosmic" (the idea of eternity and universal history), "calendar" (change of seasons, everyday life, holidays), "daily" (day and night, morning and evening)¹²⁴.

"Cyclic"¹²⁵ time is one of the first that a person notices: from the elementary change of day and night to the change of seasons, the counting of minutes, hours, years and centuries. It correlates with the calendar and daily times proposed by V.E. Halizev.

Researchers often describe a type of artistic time that reflects the properties of real time. T.V. Zhrebilo uses the definition of "dictum" time, which correlates with real world history, when the events in the work are "connected with real moments, periods"¹²⁶.

N.A. Nikolina allocates "author's" time. The author plays a leading role and chooses one genre or another, defines the artistic world, time and narrator, guided by certain intentions.

I.Y. Chernuhina introduces the term "plan of presentation", which is important for the analysis of the dystopian genre, which is focused on the author and the moment of writing the novel. She distinguishes three plans: basic (the author writes about current events), retrospective (events precede the time of writing the novel) and prospective (the story described will follow the presentation)¹²⁷. It should be noted that this concept is a relative parameter of the text, because the moment of writing the novel and its reading

¹²² Bakhtin M.M. Questions of Literature and Aesthetics. M., 1975. P. 235.

¹²³ Ibid. P. 211.

¹²⁴ Halizev V.E. Teoriya literatury. M., 2005. P. 231.

¹²⁵ Papina A.F. Tekst: ego edinicy i global'nye kategorii. M., 2002.

¹²⁶ Zhrebilo T.V. Slovar' lingvisticheskikh terminov. Nazran', 2010. P. 65.

¹²⁷ Chernuhina I.Y. Elementy organizatsii hudozhestvennogo prozaicheskogo teksta. Voronezh, 1984. P. 56.

can be removed from each other in time. In the dystopian genre, authors primarily use a prospective narrative plan, but after a while it becomes the main one for readers, and then a retrospective one. Thus, for the modern reader, the retrospective plan is the events of the novels not only by E. Zamyatin, G. Orwell, H.G. Wells and others, but also even S. Dorenko, O. Slavnikova and other authors of the 21st century.

The use of a prospective plan is justified by the prognostic function and futurological component of the dystopian genre. From this point of view, novels whose events have become retrospective for readers are of particular interest, since the reader can compare the author's assumptions about a particular time with the events that actually happened.

On the other hand, there are also novels whose time of events is not clearly indicated or is not at all compared with real historical time. This technique is used by authors in different ways. For example, stories from "Telluria" by V. Sorokin date back to the middle of the 21st century. A. Huxley described the year 632 of the time of Our Ford (one can assume that we are talking no earlier than the 25th century), and time in the works of the Strugatsky brothers, which are often classified as dystopias, often does not correlate in any way with historical reality, and therefore the reader cannot determine what time period we are talking about.

A retrospective plan of presentation is present in dystopias, which use alternative history as their main technique. For example, in 1992, R. Harris published the novel "Fatherland", the events of which unfold in 1964 in the European Union, which, according to the novel, was created by the Nazis after the defeat of the USSR.

Another version of the game with time can be observed in the "Star Wars" media franchise: each episode begins with the phrase: "A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away... ", which sends us to the past, although the events presented to the viewer are associated with the future. Apart from the intro, nothing in the films parallels real time on Earth. This is how the author describes a world without historical memory of the Earth and human history, creating a pure archetype (the creator of the franchise, G. Lucas, was inspired by J. Campbell's book "The Hero with a Thousand Faces").

Despite the possible temporal uncertainty of the events of dystopian novels, for the most part they have a logically constructed connection with real historical time.

It is important to pay attention to the concept of reference point – "time of utterance"¹²⁸, that is, the present time for the character. Prospection as the hero's turning to the future does not violate the laws of the real flow of time. On the other hand, from the time of his existence, the hero can remember past events, tell them to someone or rethink them, which leads to the appearance of retrospection, "rebounds" back along the time axis¹²⁹. Taking into account the prospective plan of presentation in dystopias, "rebounds" back to our current point of existence are extremely curious, since they convey the author's opinion about the events of those around him.

In this study we will be guided by the following definition. *Fictional time* is an immanent characteristic of an artistic text that organizes the composition of the work, determined by the author's intention and the picture of the world he depicts, correlating with other important text characteristics (communicative organization, information structure, motives, categories of textuality) and reflecting at all levels of the text the relationship of the narrative with the axis of time: real historical perspective reality or its refraction¹³⁰. This definition was formulated based on the works of D.S. Likhachev, T.V. Matveeva, Z.Y. Turaeva, N. Dragomireckaya and I.B. Rodnyanskaya¹³¹. In our opinion, this formulation most fully conveys the content of the term, satisfies the requirements of the study and is the most convenient basis for philological analysis of the text.

In dystopias, as in other genres of modern literature, there is an active transformation of temporary structures. According to B.A. Lanin, it is borrowed from

¹²⁸ Papina A.F. *Tekst: ego edinicy i global'nye kategorii*. M., 2002. P. 164.

¹²⁹ Prokof'eva Y.A. *Retrospektivnye sverhfrazovye edinstva v hudozhestvenno-avtobiograficheskom diskurse (na materiale romana A. Chudakova "Lozhitsya mgla na starye stupeni")*: vypusknaya kvalifikacionnaya rabota magistra lingvistiki. SPb., 2016.

¹³⁰ See our paper: Reutova M.A. *Textual representation of the category of fictional time in the novel "Aviator" by E.Vodolazkin*: master's final qualifying work: 45.04.02. Saint Petersburg, 2020. P. 23.

¹³¹ Likhachev D.S. *The Poetics of Early Russian Literature*. M., 1979. P. 210–211; Matveeva T.V. *Polnyj slovar' lingvisticheskikh terminov*. Rostov-na-Donu, 2010. P. 481; Turaeva Z.Y. *Kategoriya vremeni: vremya grammaticheskoe i vremya hudozhestvennoe*. M., 1979. P. 15; Dragomireckaya N. *Vremya v literature*. URL: <https://cutt.ly/myl7pwN> (Accessed: 22.11.2018); Rodnyanskaya I.B. *Hudozhestvennoe vremya i hudozhestvennoe prostranstvo // Literaturnaya enciklopediya terminov i ponyatij / pod red. A.N. Nikol'yukina*. M., 2001. P. 1174.

science fiction¹³², for example, "attributing the action to another time", "the hero's journey through time", and "extrapolation"¹³³. Also, dystopia, like fantastic literature, "can belong to three planes, three time directions at once: dystopia as a warning, by definition, is directed towards the future, but, nevertheless, for the reader everything that happens is the present, and for the characters of the work it is both past and present"¹³⁴.

As already mentioned, despite the presence of fantastic elements in dystopias, it is impossible to talk about the identity of these genres, including in relation to spatio-temporal characteristics, since fantastic literature predominantly models a reality that is different from reality, and does not seek to recreate the existing world.

In many dystopian novels, one can note a "break" in the flow of time that occurred during a catastrophe or war in the past. The worldview is divided into events "before" and "after".

Often "after" events copy facts and details of the distant past, for example, the existing form of government, a return to ancient communities, medieval life or prehistoric times (that is, complete technical and cultural regression - "The Slynx" (2000) by T. Tolstaya), which can be attributed to the philosophical concept of the New Middle Ages, which developed in the works of O. Spengler, N.A. Berdyaev, P.A. Sorokin, K.T. Jaspers, U. Beck, J. Jacobs and U. Eco and others.

Many thinkers, such as A. Sen-Simon, G.S. Pomeranc, N.A. Berdyaev, noted the alternation of periods in the development of mankind, calling them eras "organic"¹³⁵ and "critical"¹³⁶, "classical" and "medieval" or "rapid development" and "crisis"¹³⁷. N.A. Berdyaev called this phenomenon a "rhythmic change of eras and periods"¹³⁸, and G.S. Pomeranc compared it with the movement of a pendulum: "antiquity – negation of antiquity – Renaissance..."¹³⁹. Different researchers see and explain this concept differently, but all "authors are united by an interest in the changes taking place in

¹³² Lanin B.A. Russkaya literaturnaya antiutopiya XX v.: dis. ... d-ra. fil. nauk: 10.01.02. M., 1993. P. 160–161.

¹³³ Ibid. P. 160–161.

¹³⁴ Rataeva V.I. K voprosu o rassmotrenii kategorii tekstovogo vremeni i prostranstva v proizvedenii zhanra antiutopii // Vestnik magistratury. 2013. № 2 (17). P. 29–30.

¹³⁵ Sen-Simon A. Izbrannye sochineniya. Vol. 1–2. M., L., 1948. T.1. 469 p.

¹³⁶ Berdyaev N.A. The End of Our Time [a.k.a. The New Middle Ages]. M., 2002. 134 p.

¹³⁷ Pomeranc G.S. Korn' budushchego (1993)// Vyhod iz transa. M., 1995. P. 385–386.

¹³⁸ Berdyaev N.A. Op. cit. P. 5.

¹³⁹ Pomeranc G.S. Op. cit. P. 385.

society and their assessment. Alarmist sentiments generally prevail in the assessment of these changes"¹⁴⁰. N.A. Berdyaev wrote that the New Middle Ages is "the fall of the legal principle of power, the legal principle of monarchies and democracies and its replacement by the principle of strength, the vital energy of spontaneous social groups and connections"¹⁴¹.

Within the framework of this concept, humanity can not only return to the old forms of government (kingdoms, principalities, monarchies, republics, khanates, etc.) and social movements and their hybrids (crusaders and "Orthodox communists"), but also turn to mythological creatures (little people and giants) and zoomorphic life forms (centaurs and dog heads). Some scientists only raise the question "whether we are talking about a prophecy or a statement of fact"¹⁴², others argue that "the new Middle Ages is not something that will happen to us, but something that is already happening to us"¹⁴³. The appeal to the past in such literary texts and the presence of modernity in works about the future indicates the presence of cyclical time. A striking example of the use of the concept of the New Middle Ages in dystopia is the novel *Telluria*. A similar situation is observed in the novel "The Slynx" by T.N. Tolstaya. Researchers note that there is a "bad cyclicity"¹⁴⁴ in her novel, and the author answers negatively to questions about the depiction of the future in the novel: "No. Our eternal present"¹⁴⁵. O. Slavnikova's novel "2017" (2006) also shows the cyclical and rhythmic nature of history, since the October Revolution of 1917 is repeated in the described world exactly one hundred years later.

Time and space are involved in constructing the logical and content structure of any text, especially fiction. The chronotope forms "a space-time continuum (from the Latin continuous), which is the reality of the text, since it creates its continuous,

¹⁴⁰ *Kupryashkin I.V.* Konec sovremennosti: vpered i srednevekove? // *Vestnik Buryatskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta. Filosofiya*. Ulan-Ude, 2016. № 6. P. 82.

¹⁴¹ *Berdyaev N.A.* Op. cit. 134 p.

¹⁴² *Eco U.* The Return of the Middle Ages // *Inostrannaya literatura*. M., 1994. № 4. P. 258.

¹⁴³ *Baryshnikova E.N., Povalko P.Y.* Semiotics of time and its linguistic representation in the novel "Telluria" by V. Sorokin // *Filologicheskie nauki. Voprosy teorii i praktiki*. 2017. № 12 (78): in 4 p. P.2. P. 76.

¹⁴⁴ Cit. ex *Grigorovskaya A.V.* Fenomen ciklichnosti istorii v rossijskoj antiutopii 2000-h godov // *Vestnik LGU im. A.S. Pushkina*. SPb, 2011. № 3. P. 64.

¹⁴⁵ *Tolstaya T.N.* Myumziki i Nostradamus // *The Slynx*. M., 2004. P. 331.

continuous movement"¹⁴⁶. According to I.R. Galperin, "when such large objects as text are considered, many phenomena turn out to be intertwined"¹⁴⁷. Based on this, we assume that the chronotope inevitably interacts with all categories of textuality¹⁴⁸.

The "gap" of space and the disruption of the linear flow of time, as well as new living conditions, inevitably give rise to the need to address the problem of changes occurring in these conditions with human memory.

§ 1.7. The problem of memory in literary criticism

The problem of memory (as well as its concepts and mechanisms) is interdisciplinary and arouses the interest of scientists, psychologists, sociologists, neuroscientists, cultural scientists, philosophers and literary critics. P. Nora calls our time "the era of the global triumph of memory"¹⁴⁹, A. Megill gives this increased interest in the problem of memory the name "memorial mania" and explains it as follows: "when identity becomes doubtful, the value of memory increases"¹⁵⁰.

The works of M. Halbwachs laid the foundation for the sociological study of memory, within the framework of which he distinguishes individual and collective (group) memory¹⁵¹. The scientist points out the differences between these types of memory, reducing them to a number of oppositions: internal – external, personal – social, autobiographical – historical, linear – schematic, relatively complete – incomplete.

The concept of "collective memory" causes a lot of controversy and discussion. M. Halbwachs himself thought about the differentiation of history as an objective dry science and about living collective memory, and came to the conclusion that "history is

¹⁴⁶ *Ajrapetova E.G.* Specificika hudozhestvennogo vremeni v sisteme tekstovoj temporal'nosti // Universitetskie chteniya. Pyatigorsk, 2016. P. 7.

¹⁴⁷ *Galperin I.R.* Tekst kak ob'ekt lingvisticheskogo issledovaniya. M., 1981. P. 123.

¹⁴⁸ Tekst: Teoreticheskie osnovaniya i principy analiza: ucheb.-nauch. pos. / Rogova K.A., Kolesova D.V., Shkurina N.V., Rebrova I.V., Popova T.I., Voznesenskaya I.M., Horohordina O.V. / pod red. prof. K.A. Rogovoj. SPb., 2011. 456 p.

¹⁴⁹ *Nora P.* Reasons for the current upsurge in memory. URL: <https://magazines.gorky.media/nz/2005/2/vsemirnoe-torzhestvo-pamyati.html> (Accessed: 06.05.2021).

¹⁵⁰ *Megill A.* Historical epistemology. M., 2007. 3. 138.

¹⁵¹ *Halbwachs M.* Kollektivnaya i istoricheskaya pamyat' (Collective and Historical Memory). URL: <https://magazines.gorky.media/nz/2005/2/kollektivnaya-i-istoricheskaya-pamyat.html> (Accessed: 2.10.2020).

not the whole past, but it is not everything that remains from the past"¹⁵². The French historian P. Nora, in turn, shares the concepts of "memory" and "history". He writes about the acceleration of historical time that most modern societies have experienced, which has exacerbated and widened the gap between memory and history. Memory, in his opinion, is something living, developing and persisting in archaic and primitive societies. History is an organizing mechanism, an incomplete reconstruction of the past, connections with which are artificially recreated or simply absent¹⁵³. Previously, the preservation of memory was facilitated by numerous rituals that are lost in our society or created artificially, and, therefore, we can talk about history as the artificial maintenance of some semblance of memory. They wrote about the break in historical linearity before, for example, in 1977, the philosopher H. Arendt argued: "... the continuity of the past was lost <...>. What we are left with is still the past, but the past is already fragmented, having lost the certainty of assessments"¹⁵⁴. M. Halbwachs comes to the conclusion that "along with written history, there is a living history that continues or is resumed through the years, and in which one can detect a large number of previous trends that seemed to have dried up"¹⁵⁵. O.A. Kurenbina defines historical memory as "people's ideas about a specific historical event that is not relevant in everyday life"¹⁵⁶.

"Collective memory" is limited to a group that is located in a certain space and time. Such memory exists as long as the group exists, and "fades" when the group disintegrates or the majority of its members are replaced. J. Olick considers collective memory "not an operational concept: there is no agreement about what it is (assuming it exists at all) or how to measure it"¹⁵⁷.

Taking into account all of the above, we propose to use the terms "historical" and "collective (group)" memory not synonymously. By collective memory we will understand that living memory that still exists in society, that is, the memory of events

¹⁵² Halbwachs M. Kollektivnaya i istoricheskaya pamyat' (Collective and Historical Memory).

¹⁵³ Nora P. Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Memoire // Representations. Berkeley, 1989. № 26. P. 7–8.

¹⁵⁴ Arendt H. The Life of the Mind / trans. A.V. Govorunova. SPb., 2013. P. 206–207.

¹⁵⁵ Halbwachs M. Kollektivnaya i istoricheskaya pamyat' (Collective and Historical Memory). URL: <https://magazines.gorky.media/nz/2005/2/kollektivnaya-i-istoricheskaya-pamyat.html> (Accessed: 2.10.2020).

¹⁵⁶ Kurenbina O.A. Social'naya pamyat': processy konstruirovaniya i vosproizvodstva. Ekaterinburg, 2018. P. 8

¹⁵⁷ Olick J. Figurations of memory: a process-relational methodology illustrated on the German case // Sociologicheskoe obozrenie / per. D. Hlevnyuk. M., 2012. V. 11. № 1. P. 41.

of which the person himself or the 1–2 generations closest to him are a contemporary. Historical memory is a dry, fragmentary memory of distant events of the past (mainly dates, names of historical figures and major events), the connection with which is difficult or impossible for a person in a post-industrial society to feel.

It is worth paying attention to turning points in society, events that change the way of life, break it or create a new one, for example, crises, revolutions and wars. Historical memory divides the events "before" and "after" into different periods, but collective memory survives them: "People imagine that nothing has changed because continuity has been renewed. This illusion will soon be freed, but at least it allows you to move from one stage to another without feeling any break in the collective memory"¹⁵⁸. O.V. Perekhodceva¹⁵⁹ notes that in the anthology "Theories of Memory" (Theories of Memory: A Reader, 2007) they highlight "the memory of disaster and trauma", which is relevant within the framework of the study of dystopias. R. Eyerman calls this same phenomenon "cultural trauma" and defines it as "a dramatic loss of identity and meaning, a hole in the fabric of society that affects a group of people who have achieved a certain degree of cohesion"¹⁶⁰. "Cultural trauma" or "disaster memory" can include both one-time events (the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant) and entire historical periods (slavery, the Holocaust, the siege of Leningrad). Regarding the dystopian genre, it should be noted that all residents of the artistic world exist with cultural trauma from war or disaster, which led to the creation of their way of life.

Memories, memory, history are inevitably tied to space and time. An event that we know or remember inevitably happened "sometime" and "somewhere", in connection with which an important term becomes "places of memory" (*lieux de mémoire*), introduced by P. Nora¹⁶¹. Places of memory can be anyone or anything: places, texts, paintings, people, nations or generations. From the point of view of symbolism, the scientist distinguishes "dominant" (suppressive, to which they "come

¹⁵⁸ *Halbwachs M.* Kollektivnaya i istoricheskaya pamyat' (Collective and Historical Memory). URL: <https://magazines.gorky.media/nz/2005/2/kollektivnaya-i-istoricheskaya-pamyat.html> (Accessed: 2.10.2020).

¹⁵⁹ *Perekhodceva O.V.* Konceptii pamyati v sovremennom zapadnom literaturovedenii // Vestnik Permskogo universiteta. Rossijskaya i zarubezhnaya filologiya. Perm', 2012. Вып. 1(17). P. 158.

¹⁶⁰ *Eyerman R.* Cultural Trauma and Collective Memory // *Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie* / trans. N. Poselyagin. M., 2016. № 5. P. 42.

¹⁶¹ *Nora P.* Between Memory and History: *Les Lieux de Memoire* // *Representations*. Berkeley, 1989. № 26. P. 7–24.

against their will") and "dominated" (which are perceived as a refuge) places of memory¹⁶². Places of memory are a link between the past and the present and have a dual nature: while remaining in the present, they send a person to memories of the past. Memories function the other way around: they are in the past, but, nevertheless, reproducing them in memory, a person mentally constructs them in the present.

Memoirs and autobiography are the simplest way to display memory in literature, that is, the use of genres that are based on a person's history, on his memory of his life. However, in literary criticism, in comparison with other sciences, the problem of memory takes on new dimensions. German researchers A. Erl and A. Nünning formulated three concepts of memory specific to literary studies:

1. Memory of literature;
2. Memory in literature, or Mimesis of memory;
3. Literature as a medium of collective memory.¹⁶³

In *the memory of literature*, scholars include intertextuality in the sense of J. Kristeva; genre memory, which was developed by M.M. Bakhtin, and the canon.

Memory in literature touches on the problem of memory in its philosophical, psychological and sociological understandings. The authors describe the memories of the characters, the creation and transformation of these memories, and implement the mechanics of oblivion in their works.

In the third concept, *literature acts as a means of forming collective memory* through the transmission of a certain layer of texts from generation to generation. The works reflect different eras, assessing events from different points of view, which inevitably affects the worldview of readers. Also, works of literature are relevant not only at the time of their writing, but also later, which allows them to participate in the process of formation of collective memory in subsequent generations.

¹⁶² Nora P. *Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Memoire // Representations*. Berkeley, 1989. № 26. P. 23.

¹⁶³ Erl A., Nünning A. *Where Literature and Memory Meet: Towards a Systematic Approach to the Concepts of Memory used in Literary Studies // Literature, Literary History and Cultural Memory / ed. by Herbert Grabes*. Nar, 2005. Vol. 21. P. 261–294.

1.7.1. Memory of Literature

M.M. Bakhtin himself used four terms related to this issue: *large memory*, *genre memory*, *subjective memory* and *objective memory*.

In the understanding of M.M. Bakhtin "great memory is not memory of the past (in the abstract-temporal sense); time is relative in it. That which returns eternally and at the same time is irrevocable. Time here is not a line, but a complex shape of a body of rotation"¹⁶⁴. That is, in the scientist's terminology, "great memory" is something unattainable, towering above a person or a specific era, meaning "going beyond the boundaries of the separate and individual: individual life and death, one's time, personal and regional space, local history, national literature"¹⁶⁵. This concept was published in the researcher's notes and was not described in more detail.

"Genre memory" is a very well-known and much debated concept. According to M.M. Bakhtin, genre is "a typical whole of an artistic statement"¹⁶⁶ or "a typical structure, repeated in a number of works, a common structure for them"¹⁶⁷. In the book "Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics", the researcher puts forward his theory about the memory of the genre, since it is in it that "'eternal' trends in the development of literature" and "undying elements of the archaic"¹⁶⁸ are preserved. However, the genre is capable of constant "renewal" or "modernization"¹⁶⁹ over time, the development of literature and each new work of this genre. Thus, the archaic is "eternally alive"¹⁷⁰ and not dead, and the genre remembers its past while living in the present. In connection with this logic, the definition of genre is supplemented: "... a representative of creative memory in the process of literary development"¹⁷¹. Using the example of Dostoevsky's work M.M. Bakhtin shows how the menippea genre appears in the novel, even if there is no evidence that the writer was familiar with ancient literature. The appearance of the

¹⁶⁴ Bakhtin M.M. Zametki // Literaturno-kriticheskie stat'i. M., 1986. P. 519.

¹⁶⁵ Popova I.L. Problema pamyati i zabveniya: M.M. Bakhtin o mekhanizmah sohraneniya/stiraniya sledov tradicii v istorii kul'tury // Studia Litterarum. M., 2016. P. 73.

¹⁶⁶ Bakhtin M.M. The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship. New-York, 1982. P. 175.

¹⁶⁷ Tamarchenko N.D. "Estetika slovesnogo tvorchestva" M.M. Bahtina i russkaya filosofsko-filologicheskaya tradiciya. M., 2011. P. 69.

¹⁶⁸ Bakhtin M.M. Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics, 1963. Raboty 1960-h – 1970-h gg.. M., 2002. P. 120.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

features of the above genre in the works of Dostoevsky M.M. Bakhtin explained as follows: "It was not the subjective memory of Dostoevsky, but the objective memory of the very genre in which he worked that preserved the features of the ancient menippea"¹⁷². Here the terms "subjective" and "objective" memory appear as the memory of a specific person and the memory of a genre rising above it.

N.L. Lejderman proposed his definition of the *memory of the genre* "in its retrospective-historical dimension"¹⁷³: "memory of the cosmographic model of the world, which is the structural core of the mythological archetype"¹⁷⁴. But, despite agreeing with the existence of such a category as genre memory, the scientist does not fully support the idea of its uncontrolled reproduction by the author. N.L. Lejderman believes that "'Memory of a Genre' is in a genre model, as it were, in a state of suspended animation"¹⁷⁵, and the author involuntarily or intentionally "actualizes it by introducing identifying marks of the genre archetype into his text"¹⁷⁶.

L.G. Kihnej writes about genre memory, which is interpreted as "the resuscitation of certain (sometimes quite ancient) author's attitudes that bring to life a canonical (assigned to them) set of means of their formal embodiment"¹⁷⁷.

Thus, all supporters of the "genre memory" hypothesis, regardless of the interpretation and research material, rely on two leading components of the genre: its archaic, canonical part, which goes back to the origins of literature, and the modern part, capable of adapting to historical, social and cultural changes.

With regard to the third concept, we consider it necessary to note Lotman's division of memory into "creative" and "informative"¹⁷⁸. Informative memory includes scientific and technical achievements, the only relevant layer of which is the last one in the chronological order of discoveries. Such memory is sequential and linear. Literature participates in the formation of creative memory, updating all texts, and not just the

¹⁷² Bakhtin M.M. Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics, 1963. Raboty 1960-h – 1970-h gg.. M., 2002. P. 137.

¹⁷³ Ermolenko S.M. "Pamyat' teksta" kak ob'ekt izucheniya teorii literatury i obshchej teorii sistem: dis. mag. filosof. Tomsk, 2017. P. 14.

¹⁷⁴ Lejderman N.L. Teoriya zhanra. Ekaterinburg, 2010. P. 84

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Kihnej L.G. K germenevtike zhanra v lirike // Germenevtika literaturnyh zhanrov. Stavropol', 2007. P. 59.

¹⁷⁸ Lotman Y.M. Izbrannye stat'i v trekh tomah. Tallin, 1992. Vol.1. P. 200.

latest ones. It represents a sine wave that alternates between remembering and forgetting certain layers of texts depending on cultural and social movements. A. Assman describes creative memory, calling it "cultural memory"¹⁷⁹. Such memory is always open to social intervention, revision and manipulation, it is extremely unstable, it itself and its perception changes from era to era, and therefore M. Bal classifies it as "travelling concepts"¹⁸⁰.

Undoubtedly, in dystopias, all types of memory experience a crisis: collective, historical, informative and creative. Let us expand on this thesis in more detail.

1.7.2. Memory in dystopia

In dystopia, several typical signs of memory and history can be noted. In relation to the artistic time of dystopia, we have defined three periods: "before" the turning point in history, "during" and "after". It is advisable to apply a similar division to memory: memory of events "before" the turning point, "during" it and "after". Memory "before" can be correlated with the historical and/or collective memory of humanity, which is possessed by people who survived the crisis/certain invention/war/disaster that gave birth to this or that dystopian world. Even in the real world, historical and collective memory is lost over time, and in an apocalyptic dystopia, the lack of history lessons and textbooks accelerates this process. People born in the "new world" may know about the past from the old-timers, but after a few generations this information is almost completely lost.

According to L.M. Yur'eva, "the past – both historical and cultural – is rejected and falsified for the sake of the current moment"¹⁸¹. Undoubtedly, events "before" and "during" are often suppressed, destroyed or distorted. A number of works get rid of historical memory. For example, in the novel "Brave New World" by A. Huxley we see "a pestilence of bookworms <...> a campaign against the Past, museums were closed, historical monuments were blown up (most of them, thank Ford, had already been razed

¹⁷⁹ Assman A. *Is time out of joint? Rise and fall of the time regime of Modernity* / trans. Hlebnikov B., Timofeev D.. M., 2017. 272 p.

¹⁸⁰ Bal M. *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities: A Rough Guide*. Toronto, 2002. 369 p.

¹⁸¹ Yur'eva L.M. *Russkaya antiutopiya v kontekste mirovoj literatury*. M., 2005. P. 74.

to the ground by the Nine Years' War)"¹⁸². Only a certain layer of people (alphas and betas) have an idea of how people lived before global changes in society. But they interpret this information from the point of view of the modern way of life: they know that people were viviparous ("in the era of crude viviparous reproduction"¹⁸³), there was a mother and father (expletive words in their time), games did not require a lot of equipment, and so on. Some realities students can no longer understand and imagine:

— Try to realize what it was like to have a viviparous mother. <...> Try to imagine what "living with one's family" meant.

They tried; but obviously without the smallest success.

— And do you know what a "home" was?

— No. – They shook their heads¹⁸⁴.

In the novel "1984" by G. Orwell, the government uses doublethink for the same purposes: "To know and not to know; possess the truth, but proclaim lies; simultaneously and consciously adhere to two mutually exclusive opinions, sincerely believing in each of them; fight logic against logic"¹⁸⁵. The Ministry of Truth permanently changes historical events and even facts: "The Party claims that Oceania was never in an alliance with Eurasia. However, he, Winston Smith, knows for certain that Oceania was an ally of Eurasia only four years ago"¹⁸⁶. This process illustrates not only the loss, but also the substitution of memory, and not only events "before", but also phenomena "during" and "after" are subject to it.

The memory of the period "during" a turning point in history can be presented in a work in different ways, depending on where the character was at that moment and what functions he performed. Thus, ordinary people usually have minimal knowledge about what was happening, some know a little more, and individuals may have an idea of the situation as a whole.

¹⁸² *Huxley A. Brave New World / trans. from eng. O. Sorokin. M., 2017. P. 73–74.*

¹⁸³ *Ibid. P. 35.*

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid. P. 51.*

¹⁸⁵ *Orwell G. 1984 / trans. V. Golyishev, L. Bespalova. M., 2014. P. 35.*

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid. P. 34.*

Often the artistic world is structured in such a way that in the minds of ordinary residents the periods "before" and "during" did not even exist, and their current way of life has always existed. Examples include "The Hunger Games" by S. Collins and "Divergent" by V. Roth. In this case, we cannot even say whether the process of loss of historical and cultural memory was spontaneous or intentional.

The world of dystopia begins with a certain crisis, therefore, in many works, the "memory of the catastrophe" is one of the leading ones.

Chapter 2. Forms of fictional time and memory in Russian dystopia of the 21st century

§ 2.1. Review of research material

The selection of works consists of five novels by four authors. The novels we are considering are prospective, and we can conditionally determine the time of the events described in each of them.

2.1.1. Novel "The Slynx" (2000)

The events of "The Slynx" unfold "on the eve of the glorious anniversary, the bicentenary of the Explosion"¹⁸⁷. The wording refers us to the Soviet language, from which we can conclude that culture froze during the late USSR¹⁸⁸. Therefore, the explosion occurred before 1991, and the heroes live several years before 2191. Residents of the city formed on the site of Moscow are divided into three types. Firstly, the Oldeners are people who lived before the explosion and received the ability not to age; This is a small intelligentsia at the time of the story. Secondly, the degenerates are also people of the late Soviet era, who for inexplicable reasons began to play the role of serfs and beasts of burden (pulling carts, moving on all fours). Thirdly, people born after the explosion have "consequences" – mutations.

2.1.2. Duology "Day of the Oprichnik" and "Sugar Kremlin" (2006–2008)

The events take place in 2028, and three Troubles led to the described state of affairs: the Red Troubles (Lenin, Marx), the White Troubles (a certain "three-fingered enemy") and the Gray Troubles (of unclear nature). As a result of these events, a monarchy reigned in Russia. The Red Troubles is a real historical event that occurred in 1917. The Gray Troubles, judging by the chronology of the novel, occurred in 2010: "eighteen years ago. Then our people burned their international passports on Red Square. <...> to burn the legacy of the White Time of Troubles in Moscow, the

¹⁸⁷ *Tolstaya T.N.* The Slynx. M., 2020. P. 144.

¹⁸⁸ The time of the beginning of writing the novel is 1986.

capital"¹⁸⁹. The Kremlin was repainted in its original white color, and at Christmas all children in the country receive sweets as a gift – "The Sugar Kremlin". The first novel "Day of the Oprichnik" is one day in the life of the Moscow oprichnik Andrei Komyaga with a single plot. The second book, "Sugar Kremlin", is a collection of stories about residents of the described country of the future, who belong to different social groups and ages and live in different cities. This version of the narrative allows us to describe the country comprehensively, avoiding the option based on the chronotope of the high road along which the hero moves (which we see in the "Shchast'e"). We see a similar way of revealing the artistic world (through a change of narrator and the absence of a single plot line) in Pelevin's novel "Transhumanism Inc." The only thing that unites these characters is life in a specific time and a specific country.

2.1.3. Novel "Shchast'e" ("Happiness") (2010)

This text differs from all other analyzed works in the lack of specifics and any facts regarding the disaster that occurred. The reader is not given any information about what led to the described state of the world and when it happened. The researcher has to be content with only fragmentary hints:

in ancient times a fence was built there. It was built under the patronage of the Academy of Sciences, which still existed at that time. Scientists are people who, whether you like it or not, will certainly invent and discover something. The Fence builders also invented some emitters, some high-voltage fields. Folklore (the only thing left from the project) preserved legends about explosions going in both directions, mutations, zones and the like. Everything was done according to science, that's why such rubbish came out. All physicists were outlawed in the city, they somehow dealt with the Fence, but until now (how many years have passed? two hundred? three hundred?) this word radiated a concentrated, gloomy evil <...> ...after the troubled time <...> the psyche of such

¹⁸⁹ Sorokin V.G. Day of the Oprichnik. Moscow, 2017. P. 133.

individuals was originally undermined by genetic deformity and diseases of unknown etiology¹⁹⁰

(our italics - M.R.).

We can assume that the last fragment refers to something like the Radium Institute, which was founded in 1922. It "conducted work to develop technology for separating plutonium from irradiated uranium <...> Since the beginning of 1947, nuclear weapons tests and peaceful nuclear explosions have taken place"¹⁹¹. Such studies, in the event of an unfavorable development of events, could well lead to the situation described.

The vague statements of the main character suggest that the events of "Shchast'e" unfold in the 23rd – 24th centuries or later. The author describes St. Petersburg, fragmented into various districts and regions, which, although they cooperate with each other, clearly define and protect their borders. All that remains from the "ancient" times are a map and artifacts – time-worn works of art.

2.1.4. Novel "Transhumanism Inc." (2021)

This text describes a world that exists approximately in the 23rd–24th centuries or later. Humanity has learned to preserve the brain after the death of the body, maintain it in an active state and ensure its interaction with the outside world. Consciousness preserved in this way does not feel like an object floating in a solution, but exists in some other world that is difficult for ordinary people to understand. The hierarchy in the new society is supported by the fact that there are certain levels, or "tiers", of storing "brains". The cheapest way to preserve your brain for 100 years is on the first tier, and the higher the tier, the higher the cost of storage. A chip is implanted into living people, which expands the capabilities of both its carrier and the manufacturing corporation. Cerebrochips are capable of influencing feelings and emotions, which ensures sales, popularity, or, conversely, the forgetting of certain ideas and events. In this case,

¹⁹⁰ *Figl'-Migl' Shchast'e* (Happiness). SPb., 2013. P. 39, 142, 273.

¹⁹¹ Istoriya instituta. URL: https://khlopin.ru/?page_id=3426 (Accessed: 23.12.2022).

Pelevin went further than O. Huxley: chemical treatment of embryos, hypnopaedia and teaching children in childhood provide patterns of behavior only in already existing situations, but the government cannot influence the choice of a mature person in a fundamentally new situation; The implant, at any time, instills a ready-made emotion and forms an attitude towards any idea heard or situation seen. It is worth comparing two statements: "this is a good century"¹⁹² and "it's good that I'm a beta"¹⁹³ – and the allusion to *Brave New World* becomes even more obvious. The history of the development of Pelevin's world has intertextual connections with Huxley's classic dystopian novel, where the way of life changed with the advent of conveyor technology; for Pelevin it changed with the invention of the possibility of preserving the brain.

"Gray Cardinal", Big Brother¹⁹⁴ of this world – Aton Goldenstern (formerly Anton Guildenstern) – one of the inventors of brain preservation technology and the founders of the world-ruling corporation "TRANSHUMANISM INC.", whose consciousness continues to live in a jar at the highest tier. It is believed that he is the sole owner of TRANSHUMANISM INC. and all subsidiaries. The name by which this entrepreneur became known refers us to the play and film by T. Stoppard, as the author himself explains:

They started a startup mischievously named "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Live" <...> and people of English-speaking culture understood the play on words and meanings. And the point was that the dead Rosencrantz and Guildenstern were given a second chance ¹⁹⁵.

§ 2.2. Loss and substitution of memory

For the purpose of presenting a holistic picture of Russian dystopia, it is important to distribute the selected novels according to the time of the narrative: "Day of the Oprichnik" and "The Sugar Kremlin" (2028), "The Slynx" (≈2190), "Shchast'e"

¹⁹² Pelevin V.O. *Transhumanism Inc. M.*, 2021. P. 63.

¹⁹³ Huxley A. *Brave New World* / trans. from eng. O. Sorokin. M., 2017. P. 40.

¹⁹⁴ The dictator of Oceania in the novel "1984" by G. Orwell

¹⁹⁵ Pelevin V.O. *Transhumanism Inc. M.*, 2021. P. 74.

("Happiness") and "Transhumanism Inc." ($\approx 2300+$). We will analyze them in this sequence to more clearly illustrate how the distance of the artistic world along the time axis from the year the novel was written affects the characteristics of the world and historical memory¹⁹⁶. However, in some cases that we will consider, the elapsed period of time is not important.

As we said earlier, in dystopias, in most cases, the passage of time can be divided into periods "before", "during" and "after" any turning point event.

2.2.1. "Day of the Oprichnik" and "Sugar Kremlin"

In the books "Day of the Oprichnik" and "The Sugar Kremlin", historical memory is preserved to some extent. The novels describe a world of alternative history, the turning point of which is the White Time of Troubles, imagined by the author (presumably, it happened in the 1990s, but the author does not indicate the exact year). The Red Troubles that actually occurred in 1917, as well as the period between the Red and White Troubles, provide grounds for analysis. One of the characters was born in 1986 and talks about joining the Communist Party, about which his interlocutor knows nothing. From this we can come to the conclusion: people with historical memory exist, but new generations do not study in detail the history of the country before the Gray Troubles and the beginning of the reign of the sovereign. Over time, the bearers of historical and cultural memory of former times will die, and this information will be lost by the inhabitants of this world, since the authorities do not need this information. The historical memory of the new world will be a short summary of the events of the Red and White Troubles and a more detailed description of the events of the Gray Troubles and subsequent events.

¹⁹⁶ The further the events described are from the time the novel was written, the less general background knowledge and identical historical memory is among the inhabitants of this world and the reader, the greater the likelihood of the state of the future creating its own historical memory.

2.2.2. "The Slynx"

The dystopia "The Slynx" describes events much later than the two previously discussed novels. Historical and cultural memory is present here fragmentarily and distorted. There are very few carriers of the entire culture of the period "before" – the Oldeners. The darlings hear stories from them about some realities, but cannot understand what is meant. The main character repeats after his mother and other Formers such words as DEPORTMUNT, UNEVERSIY ADUCATION, PHEELOSOPHY, HONY, MASTEPYCE, WEAPUN, ENTILLECTUALS, TREDITION, RINASCENCE, but distorts them and does not understand their meaning at all. He is able to imagine only a few phenomena, for example, he correlates multi-story buildings: "There stood my mother's five-tiered hut, and my mother said that there were mansions higher, too many fingers to count the tiers"¹⁹⁷, or "the streets, he says, were covered with OSPHALT. It was as if there was such an ointment, hard, black, if you step, you won't fall through"¹⁹⁸. The store seems to him a very strange phenomenon:

Deportmunt, – you take what you want, but you don't like it, - and you turn up your nose, not like today. This deportmunt was like a Warehouse, only there was more goods there, and they did not give out goods on Warehouse days, but the doors were open all day long. I can't believe it. After all, it's everyone run and grab it? You can't have enough watchmen, can you? ¹⁹⁹.

The darlings are brought up in such a way that they have little interest in the past: "It's okay to remember the old things! As we live, so we live! It wasn't started by us!"²⁰⁰. Moreover, the narration is from the first person in the present tense. The hero comments on what he is doing now and constantly thinks about something, usually about what he sees at the moment, rarely resorting to memories. Only one thing is

¹⁹⁷ *Tolstaya T.N.* The Slynx. M., 2020. P. 18.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.* P. 18.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.* P. 14.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.* P. 17.

known about the beginning of the new world: there was an Explosion. the Oldeners themselves cannot answer the question about the nature of the Explosion: "Yes, she didn't really know. It's as if people were playing and finished the game with ARGUY. We, she says, didn't even have time to gasp"²⁰¹.

Thus, "The Slynx" presents a heterogeneous society, different layers of which have different historical and collective memories. The smallest part of society consists of the Oldeners, who are unable to influence anything, and the degenerators, who do not have the right to vote. Most of them are darlings who live one day at a time, are not interested in the past, the causes and consequences of events, and have no critical thinking.

2.2.3. "Shchast'e" ("Happiness")

In the novel "Shchast'e" the events presumably take place even later than in "The Slynx". As in the previous novel, the inhabitants of St. Petersburg of the future are little concerned about the events of the past. They are busy with their own business, survival, indulging in hedonism and busy discussing their neuroses. The characters do not mention the past familiar to the reader (before 2013), which may indicate either ignorance of this period of history or a lack of interest in it. It is known that the world has changed after the "time of troubles", but the author does not give any details. People exist in a closed space and have no idea what is happening in the world outside St. Petersburg, and some have never left their area, so they don't even know the situation in the city. So, the heroes, going to "Avtovo", where the late aunt of one of them lived, learn about the state of affairs only on Okhta: "Nikolai Pavlovich, don't you know what's happening in Avtovo? <...> - Avtovo will die in paroxysms of hedonism"²⁰². There are other examples of the limitations of the heroes: Odd-eyed constantly smokes Egyptian cigarettes, but does not know what Egypt is.

Scientists are people who store, use and transmit the memory of a particular science, processes, phenomena. In the St. Petersburg of the future, in the novel

²⁰¹ Tolstaya T.N. The Slynx. M., 2020. P. 17.

²⁰² Figl'-Migl' Shchast'e (Happiness). SPb., 2013. P. 167–168.

"Shchast'e", all scientists are prohibited, except for philologists and historians, who are mainly busy with their personal problems and studying the creativity of modern cultural figures. Research into the distant past (for the reader, the present) makes no sense for them, since the connection between eras is lost, the basic knowledge is so different that the meaning of previous works cannot be understood.

For some phenomena, names have been changed. So, the people of the Sausage Factory Union play, judging by the description, football, but they call it lapta, which confuses Figovidets:

... the lapta described in old books, at least as far as he remembered the descriptions, was fundamentally different from the lapta in its real existence. "They play with their feet», he wrote bitterly, «and you have to hit the goal, not just anywhere. I'm silent about the beats, they don't even know the words here..."²⁰³

However, cultural memory partially exists. For example, at the pre-auction show at the Russian Museum, people talk about Vrubel, Serov and Filonov²⁰⁴. Medicines, for example, Cyclodol, have also been preserved. An interesting fact is that the effect of taking cyclodol is equal to the effect of reading Sologub: "... cyclodol against Sologub"²⁰⁵, which may have been influenced by the consonance of the name of the medicine and the author's surname. Not a very large number of people know about Sologub, and, apparently, about other "ancient" writers: "—And what should I read now, Sologub? The Chancellor looked at me almost dumbfounded. — <...> Excuse me, but how do you know about him?"²⁰⁶.

²⁰³ *Figl'-Migl' Shchast'e* (Happiness). SPb., 2013. P. 103.

²⁰⁴ Ibid. P. 264.

²⁰⁵ Ibid. P. 128.

²⁰⁶ Ibid. P. 305–306.

2.2.4. "Transhumanism Inc."

In the dystopia "Transhumanism Inc." events also take place in the distant future, where technology has stepped far forward. Unlike the novels described above, in the artistic world of this work there was not one global "turning point", the world developed, and various historical events took place:

...the era of viral epidemics, civil and carbon wars, humane Euro-Islam and artificial intelligence <...> the state of Dafago was captured by the Lesser Tartarens, the Big Tartars won the elections in the European Caliphate, the compassionate people overthrew the cloned Mikhalkov-Ashkenaz dynasty and founded the Good State, and America, changing several names, went behind the information firewall <...> a new time began - green, non-carbon and generally calm.²⁰⁷

We can say that history, as before, developed in a sine wave, and humanity experienced ups and downs, good times and difficult ones. Pelevin develops a realistic model of historical and cultural memory. With the passage of time and the cessation of the existence of a certain group, insignificant events are forgotten by humanity, and only the most striking significant episodes remain in historical memory, which are included in history textbooks. So, the reader, like the main character of the first story, Manya, learns only a brief "squeeze" about these last 200s - 300s. The memory of "ancient" times also exists. At the Lyceum they are told about the ancient epic – jokes, a special *application*²⁰⁸ – the telegraph, which made it possible to send messages, they know Count L.N. Tolstoy, A.P. Chekhov and A.S. Pushkin: "Russian national poet and creator of our literary language, this very dark man with sideburns"²⁰⁹. Also, for example, Manya knows about the existence of Mozart, but clearly does not know what he looks like.

²⁰⁷ Pelevin V.O. Transhumanism Inc. M., 2021. P. 115, 116–117, 118.

²⁰⁸ Ibid. P. 110.

²⁰⁹ Ibid. P. 114.

On the other hand, "the understanding of the past changes more often than women's fashion"²¹⁰, and the processes of substitution of memory and oblivion are demonstrated in the novel. For example, after the Goldenstern Foundation took over the network infrastructure,

in all electronic editions of Shakespeare and Beckett, the word "Guildenstern" was changed to "Goldenstern" in one day. Even in scanned old editions and manuscripts. In all references to these manuscripts. And in all mentions of mentions. Guildenstern was now remembered mainly by the first names of the startup and the fund²¹¹.

In the fictional world of the novel, you can read about this on some conspiracy sites, but over time, most likely, this information will be completely forgotten. On the same sites it is written that Goldenstern bought out all the assets of his colleague Rosencrantz, but financial special forces, in an attempt to track the ownership structure, come to the conclusion that this is not so, and "the history of the issue has been cleared"²¹². In their opinion, "in our world <...> there is little you can be completely sure of"²¹³. A similar substitution of memory occurred with David Bowie's song "The Man Who Sold the World", in which sold was changed to bought "in honor of Goldenstern's informational and financial triumph"²¹⁴. "Whether this is true or a myth was difficult to understand. <...> there are no other versions left, and conspiracy theories, as we know, are extremely inventively adjusted to reality"²¹⁵. Thus, the history "before" and even "after" the beginning of technological progress in the artistic world of "Transhumanism Inc." could be subject to any changes, obvious and secret. The tendency to substitute information in all available sources is extremely close to the activities of the Ministry of Truth in the fictional world of the novel "1984", however, the absence of a totalitarian

²¹⁰ *Pelevin V.O.* Transhumanism Inc. M., 2021. P. 113.

²¹¹ *Ibid.* P. 77–78.

²¹² *Ibid.* P. 373.

²¹³ *Ibid.*

²¹⁴ *Ibid.* P. 78.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.* P. 79.

regime and a flexible control system, as well as the ability to influence the feelings and thoughts of people in real time, greatly distinguishes these novels.

Conclusion

In all the works described, one can observe a complete or partial loss of memory about certain periods of the past. In the societies depicted in "The Slynx" and in the world of the novel "Transhumanism Inc.", one can observe similar processes of memory substitution. In Pelevin's world, memory substitution concerns any information and occurs constantly and everywhere. In the cultures of the first two novels, there is no full memory of the world before the disaster. In "The Slynx" the "Oldeners" remember the old world, but cannot pass on the legacy to their descendants, since the darlings do not understand the realities of the past and cannot imagine it.

In most of the analyzed works there is no author's interest in the distant past of humanity (before the beginning of the 21st century). In the novel "Transhumanism Inc." education covers little of the ancient period, and the information provided is very brief and sometimes unreliable.

In the new reality, it is very easy to replace the memory of the past or abolish its existence, to raise children in the spirit of modernity, to instill in them a new "truth" or not to reveal something important that we observe in all situations.

D. Christian argues that "cultural changes occur much faster than genetic ones"²¹⁶. In the last three novels analyzed, an average of 200 years have passed from the structure of the world as we are accustomed to it. 200 years is approximately 8 generations, which is quite enough for fundamental cultural changes, even in the presence of carriers of the old culture. It can be argued that in the artistic world of "Shchast'e" a process occurs that is the opposite of human evolution: people, having found themselves in an aggressive environment, cannot cope with it and degrade, and in "Transhumanism Inc." The main "living" population, which exists only to serve the jar storage and "rich" brains, is declining.

²¹⁶ Christian D. Big History. Between Nothing and Everything / trans. A.D. Gromova. M., 2018. P. 186.

The phenomenon of loss of historical memory is closely related to its substitution, which humanity has been experiencing for many centuries. Data about historical events, personalities and much more have been repeatedly transformed over time due to the intentions and opinions of state rulers and ruling parties. Such cases always pursue the goal of forming the point of view necessary for the authorities in the growing generation. This area is also affected by the mistakes of unqualified historians or people who write books labeled "documentary" and "historical" without being experts in this field. O. Petrunina demonstrates the process of changing history using the example of textbooks in Greece: in 1977, changes were made that occurred after the fall of the regime of the "black colonels"; in 1981, textbooks were revised in favor of the socialists; since the second half of the 1990s, the question of a new reform has been raised with "with the goal of creating a more positive image of their neighbors in Europe"²¹⁷. Thus, dystopia also reacts to this aspect of the real world, exaggerating the situation and showing its possible consequences.

The time in which the events of the dystopia are located, and their distance from the turning point, influences what can be considered historical memory for the inhabitants of the described world. The historical memory of the inhabitants of the novels of Sorokin is still partially identical to the memory of readers of the beginning of the 21st century, however, for the worlds of Tolstoy, Pelevin and Figl-Migl, distant in time, historical memory is already a new story, which the authors introduce us to along with the development of the plot.

§ 2.3. Syncretism of eras

Despite their perspective, dystopian novels often contain signs of different eras of the past, which correlates with the philosophical concept of the New Middle Ages. The authors mix time period markers in different ways at the semantic and lexical levels, which makes them function and interact in a new context, creating the image of a new world. All analyzed works are play texts that seek to "involve the reader in an active

²¹⁷ Petrunina O. Dlya chego perepisyvayut istoriyu // Vysshee obrazovanie v Rossii. 2003. № 6. P. 138–139.

play relationship with the creator and the text he created"²¹⁸, and the syncretism²¹⁹ of features of different eras, as well as the creation of neologisms and occasionalisms, is nothing more than a game.

The process of degradation in all novels occurs before the events described, but in different ways. If in "The Slynx" this happened spontaneously (as a result of the Explosion and War), then the remaining novels demonstrate a more interesting path to the New Middle Ages.

Society in Pelevin's "Transhumanism Inc." deliberately returned to the era before the industrial revolution, justifying this with a "green eco-revolution" and the desire to preserve nature, since before people were "almost destroyed by their native planet"²²⁰. The world has changed beyond recognition:

Humanity was moving away from carbon, emissions, waste, overproduction, overpopulation, infections. Civilization was shrinking, becoming simple and environmentally friendly; man was returning to nature, from which he had so self-confidently branched off²²¹.

There is even eco-fashion, which, for example, excludes the use of chairs in carts, requiring "natural hay and pillows"²²² to be placed instead.

The sincerity of all residents in their desire for environmental friendliness is questioned, since "when Manya heard the words 'green revolution' (sometimes they said 'evolution'), tears of joy naturally appeared in her eyes, and she felt a pleasant tightness in her chest"²²³. Undoubtedly, these emotions are unnatural, they are caused by an external influence that regulates the perception of the world – an implant, and the correctness of this idea is promoted by the authorities. It is beneficial for brains in jars

²¹⁸ *Rahimkulova G.F.* Yazyikovaya igra v proze Vladimira Nabokova: dis. ... d-ra fil. nauk: 10.01.01. Rostov-na-Donu, 2004. P. 43.

²¹⁹ Syncretism – a combination of elements of different religions or cultural traditions (*Dzheri D., Dzheri Dzh.* Sinkretizm // *Bolshoy tolkovyyiy sotsiologicheskiiy slovar v 2-h tomah.* / Perevod. H.H. Marchuk. M., 1999. T.2. P. 201.).

²²⁰ *Pelevin V.O.* Transhumanism Inc. M., 2021. P. 63.

²²¹ *Ibid.* P. 62.

²²² *Ibid.* P. 273.

²²³ *Ibid.* P. 62.

that the "living" population of the planet is content with the current structure of the world: without cars, flights into space, but with outhouses and horse-drawn traction.

Sorokin also experiences a similar, albeit less detailed, gradual return to a simpler life. If for Pelevin humanity has almost used up oil, then for Sorokin gas reserves are close to depletion: "This is a great help to Russia and a great saving of precious gas"²²⁴.

In "Shchast'e", the rejection of technical sciences led to a similar situation – partial degradation of society and even culture.

Let us consider how the main historical periods are presented in the texts under study. We distinguish five such periods: primitive society, the Middle Ages and the Russian Tsardom (IX century – early XVIII century), Russian Empire (early XVIII – early XX century), 20th century – early 21st century, Future (XXI century+). Some described realities cover several periods of time and will be described only in the time interval in which they appeared.

2.3.1. Primitive society

Despite the fact that the turning point (explosion or war) occurs at the end of the 20th century or in the 21st century, in a dystopia people can also remain in a state equated to prehistoric times.

For example, the inhabitants of the world "The Slynx" do not know how to make fire, but only maintain it. The characters' idea of the world also correlates with the ancient belief in a flat earth: "... the whole damn thing on earth!"²²⁵.

The funeral of darlings is reminiscent of a pagan rite: they take out the entrails of the deceased, fill him with rust (grass), put pebbles over his eyes, put candles, mice, dishes, bows and arrows, clay figurines in the coffin: "... you need to gut him, bend your knees, bend your hands tie your feet, sculpt clay figures, put them in graves"²²⁶. Similar rituals were present among many peoples. Thus, a kind of evisceration followed by stuffing the voids in the body with herbs was carried out during

²²⁴ Pelevin V.O. *Transhumanism Inc.* M., 2021. P. 15.

²²⁵ Tolstaya T.N. *The Slynx.* M., 2020. P. 82.

²²⁶ *Ibid.* P. 276.

embalming/mummification in Ancient Egypt, among the peoples of Altai, as well as among various tribes, for example, the Guanches (indigenous population of the Canary Islands) and the Aleuts (indigenous population of the Aleutian Islands) in the 19th century²²⁷. Tying hands and feet was common among the Eastern Slavs, which symbolized "the loss of the ability to act with the help of hands and feet"²²⁸. On the one hand, this is explained by the fear of otherworldly ideas: "So that the dead do not leave their graves and wander around their homes"²²⁹; on the other hand, it is a completely aesthetic desire: "The deceased's hands and feet are tied so that they do not move apart ('so that he [the deceased] will freeze')"²³⁰. In Orthodoxy, "symbolic fetters" are still being made.

Archaeologists have discovered figurines in the burials of various cultures: Ushabti (Ancient Egypt), Mingqi (China), Tanagra figurines (Ancient Greece), etc. It is believed that such figurines should help the deceased "in the next world". In a large number of beliefs and religions, it was customary to place household items in the grave that were supposed to serve the deceased in the afterlife. A similar ritual is characteristic of a large number of peoples, including the Slavs.

Pebbles on the eyes or, in some beliefs, coins, could serve as payment for passage into the world of the dead or simply hold the opening of the eyelids. In Ancient Greece, money was intended for Charon as payment for crossing the Styx.

All of the burial traditions described above performed their own functions in each culture. Benedict does not explain these traditions in any way because he does not understand them.

The main character describes the burial of the Formers as follows: "Would they knit a cross out of wood chips and put it in the hands of their deceased, or else they would draw an idol on birch bark and also put it in his hands, like some kind of

²²⁷ *Kitova A.O.* Mummies and mummification in different cultures. URL: <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/mumii-i-mumifikatsiya-v-kulturah-raznyh-narodov> (Accessed: 31.10.2022).

²²⁸ *Bajburin A.K.* Ritual v tradicionnoj kul'ture. Strukturno-semanticheskij analiz vostochnoslavyanskikh obryadov. SPb., 1993. P. 109.

²²⁹ *Obyichai hristianskogo pogrebeniya.* URL: <https://slovar.cc/rel/obryadi/2324242.html> (Accessed: 17.11.2022).

²³⁰ *Aydakova A.G.* Obryad pogrebeniya umershih v s. Andomskiy pogost Vyitegorskogo rayona Vologodskoy oblasti. URL: <https://www.rsuh.ru/education/cmb/etnologicheskaya-ekspeditsiya-tsmb/a-g-aydakova-obryad-pogrebeniya-umershih-v-s-andomskiy-pogost.php> (Accessed: 18.10.2022).

portrait"²³¹. By "idol" we mean an icon. After the death of his colleague Varvara Lukinishna, Benedict considers it his duty to do what the Old Ones usually do and tries to reproduce the icon, completely not understanding the meaning it carries: "The idol needs to be... <...> How to draw it... He brought out the hunched head. There are curls around the head: blunder, blunder, blunder. Like the letter 'C' <...> The nose is long. Straight. Face. Sideburns on the sides"²³². He depicts Pushkin on birch bark, since for him the great poet is the same object of cult as everyone else, who does not carry any cultural or semantic load.

There is no religion in the artistic world of "The Slynx". Monotheistic religions in real history were often used to unite different cities or tribes through the creation of a common faith, common holidays and cultural traditions: the god Aten in ancient Egypt, the adoption of Christianity in Rus'. The city of Fedor-Kuzmichsk, isolated from the whole world, does not need such a unification, and the emergence of a burial ritual correlates the development of this society with various tribes and communities of the Neolithic era. People of this artistic world believe in supernatural creatures such as the Slynx and the mermaid.

Society is structured according to a primitive model - based on the manifestation of strength: "... to make it clear, they say, you are strong, and I am strong, it's better not to get involved!"²³³. Nikita Ivanovich sarcastically remarks: "...we have a Neolithic, and not some kind of wild society"²³⁴.

They live mainly by gathering and small hunting (catching mice), occasionally someone kills a bear. Wealthy little darlings, like Kudeyar Kudeyarovich, can afford farming, which indicates a higher standard of living and a transition to a new stage of development. The emergence of inventors and scientists is impossible here, and the exit from the life of a primitive society can only be accomplished thanks to the knowledge that the ruler decides to give to the people:

²³¹ *Tolstaya T.N.* The Slynx. M., 2020. P. 140.

²³² *Ibid.* P. 278.

²³³ *Ibid.* P. 139.

²³⁴ *Ibid.* P. 154.

Who thought of cutting a wheel out of wood? Fedor Kuzmich. He taught us how to hollow out stone pots, how to catch mice and how to cook soup. He gave us an invoice and a letter <...> He taught us how to make dugout boats from logs and launch them into the water, and taught us how to hunt a bear with a spear²³⁵.

In this case, the image of Fyodor Kuzmich acts as a reference to the mythical cultural hero described by E.M. Meletinsky:

...a character who obtains or for the first time creates for people various cultural objects (fire, cultivated plants, tools), teaches them hunting techniques, crafts, arts, introduces a certain social organization, marriage rules, magical prescriptions, rituals and holidays²³⁶.

A similar education of the population can be observed in a number of Strugatsky's novels, which describe the "Noon Universe". In this literary world, there are Progressors - "representatives of highly developed intelligent races, whose responsibilities include promoting the historical progress of civilizations at a lower level of social development"²³⁷. The idea of progressivism is widespread in literature and is studied by literary scholars and philosophers, and B.A. Lanin notes that "progressorism", that is, the theme of "the drivers of history", is the theme of dystopian works²³⁸. For example, S. Hagi describes such progressors in the novels by Pelevin "S.N.U.F.F" (a parody on the theme of progressorism) and the collection of A. Garros and A. Evdokimov "Juchche"²³⁹. This idea can also be seen in the novels by S. Lukyanenko "The Stars Are Cold Toys" and Holm van Zaichik²⁴⁰ "There are No Bad

²³⁵ Tolstaya T.N. *The Slynx*. M., 2020. P. 20.

²³⁶ Meletinskij E.M. *Kul'turnyj geroj // Mify narodov mira. Enciklopediya v 2-h tomah*. M., 1988. Vol.2. P. 25.

²³⁷ Boriskova E. Tema "progressorstva" v romanah Strugatskyh iz cikla "Mir Poludnya". URL: <https://spb.hse.ru/ixtati/news/720082853.html> (Accessed: 28.09.2022).

²³⁸ Lanin B.A. *Russkaya literaturnaya antiutopiya XX v.: dis. ... d-ra. fil. nauk: 10.01.02*. M., 1993. P. 195.

²³⁹ Hagi S. *One Billion Years after the End of the World: Historical Deadlock, Contemporary Dystopia, and the Continuing Legacy of the Strugatskii Brothers // Slavic Review*. Cambridge, 2013. Vol. 72. № 2. P. 267

²⁴⁰ Holm van Zaichik is the joint pseudonym of Russian science fiction writers and sinologists - Vyacheslav Rybakov and Igor Alimov.

People. Eurasian Symphony". According to M.N. Lipovetsky, the Strugatskys themselves in the novels came to understand the impossibility of continuing such a mission, and one of the later unspoken tasks of the progressors became "how not to become like 'them'"²⁴¹. In Tolstoy's novel, the progressors are the Formers - people from the "other world", civilized and prosperous. They try to bring knowledge to this new world, but to no avail. Fyodor Kuzmich in the world of "The Slynx" is an impostor who pretends to be a progressor without having the right to do so.

Thus, the prehistoric period of history is manifested in the knowledge possessed by society or part of it, in tools and weapons that have already been invented and used, as well as beliefs and worldviews.

2.3.2. The Middle Ages and the the Russian Tsardom (IX century – early 18th century)

References to this period of history can be found more often than to the previous one. In the novels of Tolstaya, Sorokin, Pelevin and Figl-Migl, huts, chambers and estates are mentioned. The darlings live in huts with a palisade, only the wealthy have a tower (Kudeyar Kudeyarovich and Fyodor Kuzmich), in the Good State the estate of Mani (a poor aristocrat) is described and there are also outhouses ("Where is the outhouse here? <...> - a gray barracks near the service stable"²⁴²), and in "Shchast'e" there is a village: "... as it is depicted in pictures in a geography textbook: a scattering of huts with sheds attached to them"²⁴³. The oprichniks in Sorokin's story has a "barn, a hay barn, a barn, a stable"²⁴⁴, as well as servants of "a cowgirl, a lady-cook, a cook, a janitor, a huntsman, a watchman, and a housekeeper"²⁴⁵.

Also in Sorokin's Russia ovens are used:

The birch bark crackled, Marfusha placed a bunch of birch chips on top of the cones, inserted the pipe, and inserted the other end into the hole in the wall.

²⁴¹ *Lipoveckij M.N.* Eshche raz o komplekse progressora. URL: <https://cutt.ly/hN7DMap> (Accessed: 08.11.2022).

²⁴² *Pelevin V.O.* Transhumanism Inc. M., 2021. P. 115.

²⁴³ *Figl'-Migl' Shchast'e* (Happiness). SPb., 2013. P. 115.

²⁴⁴ *Sorokin V.G.* Day of the Oprichnik M., 2017. P. 5.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

There, behind the wall, is a common chimney for their entire sixteen-story building. The samovar hummed merrily and the pine cones crackled. And the grandmother was right there: as soon as she read the morning prayer, she immediately began to light the stove. Now everyone in Moscow heats the stove in the morning, prepares lunch in the Russian stove, as the Sovereign commanded²⁴⁶.

The first stoves in Rus' were built already in the 10th–11th centuries, but they appeared in the form familiar to readers only in the 13th century²⁴⁷. In this world, stoves are installed in apartments in multi-story buildings, which combines the Middle Ages with more recent realities. Ovens are also present in Fedor-Kuzmichsk. In these works, the stove retains all its functions: they cook in it, heat their homes with it, and sleep on it.

Serfs are present in the worlds of Tolstaya and Pelevin. In real history, servitude existed until 1723 and was abolished by Peter I. Serfdom was close to slavery, and the abolition of the very form of dependence did not abolish the presence of people in a similar position. In "The Slynx", this caste becomes degenerators; they are used instead of horses, which are absent in this world, harnessed to sleighs. Also, serf becomes a contextual synonym for the word "boorish", since rudeness is the typical behavior of degenerators: "He bites the bridle, he's rude..."²⁴⁸. In "Transhumanism Inc." horses remain draft power, but all maintenance falls on slaves – biorobots: "I'm talking about helpers. Or, as we say in the outback, serfs"²⁴⁹. In this case, we are seeing a pun: the English word "helper", consonant with it, the Russian obsolete word "bondman" ([holop]), which is connected with the new invention of the future.

In "The Slynx", the majority of the population wears homespun coat, which were widely used in the 16th - 19th centuries²⁵⁰.

²⁴⁶ Sorokin V.G. The Sugar Kremlin. M., 2008. P. 15.

²⁴⁷ Istoriya pechi. URL: <https://pskovlib.ru/lektcii-obzory-m/istoriya-veshchej-sx/13495-istoriya-pechi> (Accessed: 28.03.2023).

²⁴⁸ Tolstaya T.N. The Slynx. M., 2020. P. 183.

²⁴⁹ Pelevin V.O. Transhumanism Inc. M., 2021. P. 103.

²⁵⁰ Homespun coat // Bol'shaya sovetskaya enciklopediya. V 30-ti tomah. 1969–1986. URL: <https://www.booksite.ru/fulltext/1/001/008/047/315.htm> (Accessed: 15.03.2023).

In Sorokin's dilogy, monarchists came to power, the Sovereign rules, and the internal order is monitored by the oprichniks, which is a clear reference to the reign of Ivan the Terrible and the oprichnina he introduced, which existed in 1565-1572.

2.3.3. Russian Empire (early 18th century – early 20th century)

The authors' appeal to the past is not limited to borrowing household items or outdated word forms. In the novel "The Slynx" we see a duplication of historical precedents at the event level. Until 1700 (before the reform of Peter I), the New Year in Russia was celebrated on March 1 according to the Julian calendar. In the novel "The Slynx", Fyodor Kuzmich issues an order: "Celebrate the New Year Holiday. This holiday should be celebrated on the First of March"²⁵¹. The transformations of Peter I affected not only the date, but also the process of celebration: in both orders, festive lighting becomes important: "Light the candles too so that it is bright and cheerful"²⁵²; "at night, light fires from wood, or brushwood, or straw"²⁵³.

Peter the Great orders "... to make some decorations from trees and branches of pine, spruce and juniper, <...> and for poor people to put at least a tree or a branch on the gate, or over their mansion"²⁵⁴. The Greatest Murza also prescribes "to cut down a tree in the forest so small and spreading that it fits into a hut, and whoever wants to, put it in the yard. Stick this tree into the floor or wherever it is necessary to hold it, and hang all sorts of things that anyone has on the branches"²⁵⁵. The tradition of decorating the Christmas tree goes back "to the New Year's pagan cult of spruce among the ancient Germans"²⁵⁶, in which all the objects with which the tree was decorated had their own significance and meaning. For example,

the candles symbolized the stars of the Christmas night. <...> fruits - first of all, apples: both as symbolic gifts to the baby Jesus, and as a sign that the

²⁵¹ Tolstaya T.N. *The Slynx*. M., 2020. P. 83–84.

²⁵² Ibid. P. 84.

²⁵³ Ukaz Petra I № 1736 "O prazdnovanii Novogo goda". URL: http://nlr.ru/e-res/law_r/search.php (Accessed: 9.10.2022).

²⁵⁴ Ibid.

²⁵⁵ Tolstaya T.N. *The Slynx*. M., 2020. P. 84.

²⁵⁶ Dushchikina E.V. *Russkaya elka. Istoriya, mifologiya, literatura*. SPb., 2014. P. 108.

spruce was considered as a tree of paradise that bears fruit. <...> Then wafers appeared on the tree – flat cakes made from unleavened dough, used by Catholics and Protestants during communion²⁵⁷.

This symbolism has been lost by most of those celebrating in the real world, and in the artistic world of "The Slynx" it cannot exist, since the concept of Christianity and the figure of Jesus are missing²⁵⁸.

Within the framework of this decree on the celebration of the New Year, two periods are combined at once: before (in relation to the date) and after (in relation to the method of celebration) 1700.

Ruler Fyodor Kuzmich bears the following titles: "Big Murza, Secretary and Academician and Hero and Navigator and Carpenter", before us is another stolen Pushkin quote: "Now an academician, now a hero, now a navigator, now a carpenter"²⁵⁹. Fyodor Kuzmich strives to imitate Peter I in everything, to become a great ruler-transformer, educator.

In Sorokin's dilogy, the "Table of Ranks", introduced by Peter I in 1722, is again used.

The erection of the monument to Pushkin in the novel "The Slynx" by Nikita Ivanovich and Benedict is a clear allusion to the installation of a similar monument in Moscow in June 1880. It is located on Strastnaya (since 1931 – Pushkinskaya) Square. There are no streets recognized by the government in Fedor-Kuzmichsk, but Pushkin was placed "on Strastnoy". "Passionate" appeared thanks to the efforts of Nikita Ivanovich, who

started putting up poles all over the town. Near his house, he carved on a pole: "Nikitinskie Vorota". Otherwise we don't know. There are, however, no

²⁵⁷ *Dushechkina E.V.* Russkaya elka. Istoriya, mifologiya, literatura. SPb., 2014. P. 109.

²⁵⁸ During the USSR, Christianity was not supported by the party; the "policy of eliminating organized religious life" was promoted (*Lem'eva A.I.* Religion in the Soviet Union as a problem of atheistic society // *Istoricheskij put' Rossii: iz proshlogo v budushchee*. SPb., 2021. P. 738.). The symbolism of the decorations on the Christmas tree was lost; Jesus Christ was not mentioned. Consequently, in this one element there is an overlap of two times: the Petrine era and the USSR.

²⁵⁹ From the poem "Stanzas" (1826) by A. S. Pushkin.

gates there. Rotten. But let it be. In another place he will cut out: "Balchug". Or: "Polyanka". "Strostonoy Boulevard". "Kuznetsky Most". "Volkhonka"²⁶⁰.

The "real" Pushkin is cast from bronze, but the monument in the novel is carved from wood, which Nikita Ivanovich regrets: "If only it were made of stone! I'm not talking about bronze, I still have to live to see bronze..."²⁶¹. "Before the Bronze" means before the "Bronze Age" in Soviet historical terminology.

In real history, the erection of the monument was of a ceremonial nature and was an important cultural event that marked a new stage in the formation of Russia. According to M.Ch. Levitt, in the 19th century, the Russian intellectuals acutely raised the question of Russian identity, and also felt "dissatisfaction and even despair from the awareness of their cultural inferiority"²⁶² against the backdrop of "civilized" Europe.

It was in Pushkin that the Russians found their Dante, justification and measure of national self-respect, <...> the paths to the formation and strengthening of modern Russian national identity converged on literature, and at the center of their convergence was Pushkin²⁶³.

Moreover, in that historical period, the intellectuals did not exist for the state, and "newspapers called the Pushkin celebrations a 'holiday of the Russian intellectuals' "²⁶⁴, which gave them hope of gaining the official status of the "middle" class. In "The Slynx" we see a similar situation – the intellectuals is small and powerless, and Nikita Ivanovich, by creating and erecting a monument to Pushkin, tried to symbolically change the situation, find some kind of identity, and overcome the crisis in society.

K.N. Leontyev <...> suggested (not without irony?) that [the erection of the monument] foreshadowed a "deep historical revolution" in Russian life,

²⁶⁰ *Tolstaya T.N.* The Slynx. M., 2020. P. 30.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.* P. 250.

²⁶² *Levitt M.C.* Literatura i politika: pushkinskij prazdnik 1880 goda. SPb., 1994. P. 10.

²⁶³ *Ibid.* P. 11.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.* P. 23.

comparable to the baptism of Rus' and the forced Europeanization of Russia by Peter the Great²⁶⁵.

In "The Slynx" this event went unnoticed. It seems that the only one who noticed this action, besides the six who dragged and installed, was the owner of the dill beds, in the middle of which the installation was originally planned. Afterwards, the monument became an object of everyday use: "I scared the little guys so that they wouldn't climb on it"²⁶⁶, "the people are absolutely wild: they tied a rope, they are hanging laundry on the singer of freedom! Underwear, pillowcases - wildness!"²⁶⁷. At the end of the novel, the monument to Pushkin falls victim to a fire:

Above the yellow, burnt clearing of black googly stood and smoked what used to be Pushkin's. <...> The sideburns and face were baked into one cake. On the swelling of the elbow lay a pile of white ash with lights running across it, and all six fingers fell off²⁶⁸.

The cultural and political revolution that Nikita Ivanovich strove for had no future initially, but only at the end did he see the futility of his efforts. Even Benedict was unable to understand why Pushkin was so important; he did not even consider it necessary to write him with a capital letter.

Allusions to this time period also appear in the descriptions of the everyday life of residents of various dystopias.

In "Transhumanism Inc." many poor families use kerosene in their homes: "Manya justified this to her friends by saying that kerosene lamps, paradoxically, have a smaller carbon footprint than electric lamps"²⁶⁹. The "carbon footprint" refers to a "carbon footprint", the reduction of which, according to some environmentalists, "is one of the most important tasks of our time, the solution of which will allow us to approach

²⁶⁵ *Levitt M.C.* Literatura i politika: pushkinskij prazdnik 1880 goda. SPb., 1994. P. 8.

²⁶⁶ *Tolstaya T.N.* The Slynx. M., 2020. P. 198.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.* P. 250.

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.* P. 348.

²⁶⁹ *Pelevin V.O.* Transhumanism Inc. M., 2021. P. 54.

an acceptable level of anthropogenic impact on the biosphere and help mitigate the consequences of climate change"²⁷⁰.

At the end of the novel, Teterya and Kudeyar Kudeyarovich find "pinzin" (gasoline) and "give" it to the people. This event turns into a tragedy and illustrates the unpreparedness of people for such "leaps" of development. In real history, gasoline was invented in 1825, but became widely used only at the end of the 19th century²⁷¹.

2.3.4. 20th century – beginning of the 21st century

In the novel "The Slynx" in the chapter "People", Fyodor Kuzmich issues a decree: "The eighth of March is also International Women's Day. + This holiday is not a day off"²⁷². According to the Great Soviet Encyclopedia, International Women's Day in Russia was first celebrated with a demonstration in 1913 in St. Petersburg, and since 1965 it has been officially declared a non-working day²⁷³. At first glance, this document is an allusion to the period from 1913 to 1966, however, on this day, according to the text of the decree, all women are ordered to "politely congratulate", and they themselves should wash the whole house, wash themselves and set the table, which corresponds to a later perception of the holiday in society, when it had already lost its political connotation, which corresponds to the period of the late USSR.

The Soviet period of real history is most often reproduced in modern dystopias.

In "Shchast'e" on Okhta we can observe the following picture:

The children marched in a troop led by two high school students. Everyone was dressed the same (I was struck by white knee socks and polished low shoes), the stronger boy carried a waving flag, and a canvas bag with a red cross hung over the shoulder of a girl with a blonde braid²⁷⁴.

²⁷⁰ Polyakov R.A. Praktika podscheta uglerodnogo sleda pri provedenii meropriyatij // Simvol nauki. Vol. 9–2. 2016. P. 190.

²⁷¹ Kto pervym v mire izobrel benzin, kogda on poyavilsya – istoriya izobreteniya. URL: <https://history-doc.ru/transport/kto-izobrel-benzin/> (Accessed: 12.08.2022).

²⁷² Tolstaya T.N. The Slynx. M., 2020. P. 121.

²⁷³ Balahovskaya L.G. Mezhdunarodnyj zhenskij den' 8 marta // Bol'shaya sovetskaya enciklopediya. V 30-ti tomah. 1969–1986. URL: <https://www.booksite.ru/fulltext/1/001/008/130/index.htm> (Accessed: 15.03.2023).

²⁷⁴ Figl'-Migl' Shchast'e (Happiness). SPb., 2013. P. 150.

In this society, strict order and denunciations are considered the norm, and this regime is opposed by anarchists led by Kropotkin, which is a direct reference to the real historical creator of the ideology of anarcho-communism P.A. Kropotkin. However, a fictional character and a real person are very different from each other: apart from ideas and a surname, nothing unites them. Thus, the real Kropotkin was on good terms with V.I. Lenin, was more of a theorist than a practitioner, and died a natural death at an old age. The hero of "Shchast'e" hid from the Okhta government in a cemetery and died a violent death in middle age.

For the Soviet period, it was typical to name the city after the name of the ruler: Leninakan, Leninogorsk, Nizhne-Stalinsk and others²⁷⁵; and renaming: Petrograd – Leningrad, Tsaritsyn – Stalingrad, Perm – Molotov, Rybinsk – Shcherbakov – Rybinsk – Andropov, which we see in the novel "The Slynx": "And the name of our city, our native side, is Fedor-Kuzmichsk, and before that, says mother, the name was Ivan-Porfiryichsk"²⁷⁶, and at the end of the story Kudayar-Kudeyarychsk.

Renaming is a feature not only of the novel "The Slynx", but also of many others; they refer to the Soviet period of the country's history, and also emphasize the great importance of this fact.

In Sorokin's dilogy, the construction of the Great Russian Wall is underway, which, on the one hand, is an allusion to a similar wall in China²⁷⁷, on the other, a reference to the history of the Soviet Union and the "restoration of the Iron Curtain, a symbol of the isolationist policy of the USSR"²⁷⁸.

The keyboard (in Russian [klaviatura]), shortened colloquially to the word "Klava", becomes "Klava Ivanovna" due to the consonance of the short version with a woman's name. Women's names are also found on torture devices: Tanyusha is a caning

²⁷⁵ *Vezhbin'ski Y.* Toponimicheskie sovetizmy, svyazannye s imenami Lenina i Stalina // *Folia Linguistica Rossica*. Lodz', 2012. № 8. P. 103–111.

²⁷⁶ *Tolstaya T.N.* The Slynx. M., 2020. P. 18.

²⁷⁷ Construction lasted from the 3rd century BC until 1644.

²⁷⁸ *Greshilova A.V.* Russkaya arhaika v romane T. Tolstoj "Kys" i v dilogii V. G. Sorokina "Den' oprichnika" i "Saharnyj Kremel'" // *Filologicheskie nauki. Voprosy teorii i praktiki*. 2017. № 12–3 (78). P. 30.

bench²⁷⁹, and a "standard steel chest with interrogation equipment"²⁸⁰ at Lubyanka is called a "nesmeyana". On the one hand, the princess was called Nesmeyana (approximate transcript "not laughing girl") in a number of Russian folk tales, on the other hand, no one laughs during torture. There have already been cases in Russian culture when equipment was called by human names, for example, a combat vehicle during the Great Patriotic War was named Katyusha, the M-30 projectile was called Luka, and the German multiple launch rocket system was called "Vanyusha"²⁸¹. The same trend includes the names of smart speakers that appeared after the publication of the novels, mainly with female names (Alice, Marusya), as well as voice assistants for smartphones (Siri, Bixby and Sam)²⁸².

Sorokin describes something similar to Smart Home technology: "Immediately the lights in the apartment turned on and a large beige-silver robot rolled out"²⁸³.

2.3.5. Future (XXI century+)

The future tense is conventionally characterized by occasionalisms and neologisms created by the authors for new phenomena. In this case, it can be argued that this is a logical change in language in accordance with the evolution or mutation of the world around man and the need to name previously non-existent realities. In relation to literary works, scientists distinguish two concepts: pseudo-realities and quasi-realities. Pseudo-realities are "realities created on the model of phenomena, facts, persons, names known to the reader, with which an associative connection is preserved"²⁸⁴. The term quasi-realities is interpreted mainly in studies of novels of the science fiction and fantasy genres, for example:

²⁷⁹ Until the end of the 19th century, the whipping bench was called a "mare".

²⁸⁰ Sorokin V.G. *The Sugar Kremlin*. M., 2008. P. 69.

²⁸¹ Shirokorad A.B. "Luka" i "Katyusha" protiv "Vanyushi". URL: https://nvo.ng.ru/history/2010-03-05/12_katusha.html (Accessed: 13.04.2023).

²⁸² Information about smart speakers and smartphones already belongs to the 21st century.

²⁸³ Sorokin V.G. *Op. cit.* P. 154.

²⁸⁴ Chernikova G.O. O nekotoryh osobennostyah filosofskoj problematiki romana Mihaila Bulgakova "Master i Margarita" // *Analele Universitatii Din Timisoara*. Timisoara. Sena Stiinte Filologice. 1971. Vol. 9. P. 214–215.

Words (word combinations) related to the themes of science fiction texts, with a description of theoretically possible, but not currently implemented, solutions to scientific or technical problems, with a description of elements of the environment of a fictional world²⁸⁵

or "realities that are a figment of the imagination of a particular author"²⁸⁶. A common characteristic for all three genres (science fiction, fantasy and dystopia) is the creation of a new artistic world, which leads to the presence of pseudo- and quasi-realities, including in dystopias.

The novels of Tolstaya, Pelevin and Sorokin are replete with such words, since the artistic worlds of their works are the most distant from our contemporary beginning of the 21st century and have changed greatly.

In "The Slynx", similar words are used by residents of Fedor-Kuzmichsk mainly in relation to animals, plants, household items and mythological creatures. Not only people, animals and plants undergo mutations, but also language. Some of the occasionalisms are recognized by the reader by the recognition of the original word forms: worrum, beetroot, thistledown, fern, mushrooms, blindie bird, with eyes fourscore in number, poke, zheltenchiki, slit, zapselye, pamorok. The other part is understood by the reader from the context: karla (dwarf), kolobashki (curlers), titlo (title). All of the words listed can be classified as pseudo-realities. The text also contains semantic neologisms: *the Oldeners, consequences, orderly*.

In "Transhumanism Inc." most of the "new" words are understood by the reader from the context and describe the life and phenomena of society: adolfych, bro kukurator, accubus, tryn-tran, non-binary, custodian, megathuring, conflimbiosis, and so on.

²⁸⁵ Tarakanova Y.E. Kvazirealii kak leksicheskij element nauchno-fantasticheskogo teksta na primere perevoda rasskaza "Fevral' 1999: Illa" Reya Bredberi na russkij yazyk // Vestnik Moskovskogo gosudarstvennogo oblastnogo universiteta. Seriya: Lingvistika. 2007. № 1. P. 295.

²⁸⁶ Bozhko E.M. Analysis of Ways to Render Quasi-Realias in the Russian Translation of the Novel "The Lord of the Rings" by John R.R. Tolkien, Carried out by A.A. Gruzberg // Vestnik YUzhno-Ural'skogo gosudarstvennogo gumanitarno-pedagogicheskogo universiteta. 2010. № 1. P. 239.

Pelevin plays a complex game with the reader through neologisms. Often, the first use of such future words, unrecognizable by word form, appears in the text without any descriptions or explanations. Thus, the author gives the reader time to guess, imagine, and try to explain the meaning of the word before characterizing and explaining it in the context of the artistic world. For example, the *cuckoo* constantly appears in the text from the first pages of the story: "From early childhood impressions, the *cuckoo*therapeutic would say <...> an expensive new *cuckoo* from his father"²⁸⁷. Moreover, the author seeks to confuse the reader by personifying the cuckoo: "... not only they heard the cuckoos, but also the cuckoos <...> showing good intentions to their cuckoos <...> The cuckoo doesn't delve into it, the cuckoo counts"²⁸⁸.

The understanding that the *cuckoo* is worn around the neck comes on page 19: "A bare neck is super sexy: almost no one sees girls like that. Perhaps a mirror when changing the cuckoo. Or a pathologist"²⁸⁹. The reader receives a full explanation that the cuckoo is a mandatory collar for all citizens, connected to an implant in the head and capable of reading QQ codes of surrounding objects, people, ideas and other things, only on page 40. QQ codes cause the reader to associate with existing QR codes, and therefore this phenomenon can be attributed to pseudo-realities, and the derivative "cuckoo" becomes a semantic neologism: there is an expression "cuckoo has gone", that is, "a person has gone crazy".

The *GSh-word* also appears at the very beginning of the novel in the form of graffiti. From the context, the reader can only understand that this is an indecent or abusive word: "... she didn't stoop to the GSh-word – she wasn't from that kind of family"²⁹⁰. It is later explained that this is a local euphemism for a person with the surname Goldenstern. There are many personalities in religion, culture and media who are not usually named or mentioned. For example, the phraseology associated with Christianity "do not take the name of the Lord in vain"²⁹¹. Literature gives us an extensive list of examples: Voldemort from "Harry Potter" by J. Rowling, the name of

²⁸⁷ Pelevin V.O. Transhumanism Inc. M., 2021. P. 7, 9.

²⁸⁸ Ibid. P. 15, 17.

²⁸⁹ Ibid. P. 19.

²⁹⁰ Pelevin V.O. Transhumanism Inc. M., 2021. P. 8.

²⁹¹ Third commandment of Jesus Christ.

the Emperor in "Aargh" by A. Belyanin, the name of the God of the Destroyer from the "Stranger" series by I. Dravin, H.P. Lovecraft in N. Gaiman's story "Shoggoth's Old Peculiar" and so on.

In the Strugatskys' novel "The Final Circle of Paradise", we can observe a similar game with the reader regarding the name of a new radio drug that immerses a person in virtual reality. First, the hero sees an inscription in a telephone booth: "Someone, apparently, with a knife, deeply carved the unfamiliar word 'SLEG' in block letters"²⁹², then they explain to him that this word cannot be used:

...the word is not good. Now some people have gotten into the habit of writing it on the walls everywhere. That's hooliganism, isn't it? The brats don't really know what it is, but they write... Look, you see, we planed the barrier... Some bastard cut it out, if he caught it, he would turn it inside out...²⁹³.

In "Transhumanism Inc." There is also a semantic neologism bankers – preserved brains. The writer himself explains:

The word "banka" (in English – "jar") was a purely Russian replacement - "go to the jar" sounded more optimistic than "go to the box (in English – bite the dust)". In the rest of the world they used the term "box". The individual brain storage module was similar to an opaque parallelepiped²⁹⁴.

Sorokin takes a different path: he describes objects familiar to the reader, but modernized to functions that did not exist at the time of writing the novel (that is, mainly pseudo-realities).

For example, a toothbrush and a comb that brushes your teeth, combs your hair, and does your hair:

²⁹² Strugatsky A.N., Strugatsky B.N. *The Final Circle of Paradise*. M., 2022. P. 86.

²⁹³ Ibid. P. 161.

²⁹⁴ Pelevin V.O. *Transhumanism Inc.* M., 2021. P. 75–76.

she revived a toothbrush in the shape of a yellow-red dragon, gave it some tooth elixir, and put it in her mouth. The little dragon sprinkled a pleasant mint on his tongue, pounced on his teeth, and purred. Meanwhile, Marfushenka ran a comb through her hair. The puff comb began to do its usual work, crawled, buzzing, through the brown hair <...> She combed it, returned to the top of her head and began to braid her hair²⁹⁵.

Or a living portrait that can smile and respond to the interlocutor.

A smart machine, or smart girl, is a computer of the future, which, when turned on, shows a hologram in the shape of a bubble, and can also voice its answers: "— Hello, Smart Girl! The blue bubble lights up in response and winks: — Hello, Marfusha!"²⁹⁶, "Smart Girl answers in an obedient voice"²⁹⁷, "A hologram hung over the table"²⁹⁸. The hologram in this case is a clear element of the future, which can be called a frequent element of the science fiction genre. At the time the novel was written (as well as today), such technology does not exist. However, voice control and response systems using a speech synthesizer have already been invented.

Robots that do not exist in the real world are widespread even among poor people. They have a wide functionality: they are able to bring the usual drink to the owner ("...there was a glass of vodka inside the robot"²⁹⁹), turn on music, take clothes to the closet, run a bath and add flavorings to the water ("Petrusha was pleased to note that the robot added something to the water that didn't bother 'The Apple Tree Dream', and 'The Tale of the Seven Seas'"³⁰⁰), they put a cigarette in the owner's open mouth, and so on.

Along with rods and whips, there is a new high-tech method of punishment and torture – through an injection into the carotid artery, a person's body is made into crystal and they are threatened with breaking it with a hammer.

²⁹⁵ Sorokin V.G. *The Sugar Kremlin*. M., 2008. P. 13–14.

²⁹⁶ Ibid. P. 16.

²⁹⁷ Ibid. P. 18.

²⁹⁸ Ibid. P. 72.

²⁹⁹ Sorokin V.G. *The Sugar Kremlin*. M., 2008. P. 154.

³⁰⁰ Ibid. P. 155.

There is a transformation of the borrowed word Internet, which existed at the time of writing the novel. The **Internet** is being transformed into **interda**. In this case, we are observing a lexical game: the word is considered not as a foreign borrowing, in which "no" is a translation from the English "net", but as a Russian particle of negation, which is replaced by a particle of agreement.

Instead of the "turn on - off" pair, the verbs "revive - put to sleep" are used: on the one hand, this can be a copy of the English "sleep mode", on the other hand, this indicates an attitude towards the machine as a living organism. A similar tendency to animate a car exists in society, from the affectionate address to the car "My Swallow" to full-fledged dialogues with a computer and smart speakers in the 21st century.

In the novel "Shchast'e", despite the significant distance of events from the 21st century, there are practically no pseudo- and quasi-realities. A semantic neologism can be noted: Odd-eyed is a person with heterochromia, which indicates his ability to see ghosts and get rid of them.

It should be noted that in the novels "The Slynx", "Transhumanism Inc." and Sorokin's dilogy, the signs of different eras are mixed in a single space. Thus, in Fedor-Kuzmichsk, the inability to make fire coexists with the celebration of the New Year and March 8 and with the ability to read and write, and in the Good State biorobot-serfs and kerosene lamps, high-tech implants, neurolink advertising³⁰¹ and horse-drawn carriages coexist. In Sorokin's future, people live in apartments with a smart home system, using holograms along with stoves.

In the dystopia "Shchast'e" individual artistic spaces are immersed in different time periods. Thus, on Okhta people are experiencing something similar to the construction of communism and the Soviet regime, the City is representative of wealthy trading societie.

The world of dystopia is a world devoid of development, capable only of copying/duplicating past experience. People of this world only know how to adapt,

³⁰¹ Neurolink advertising is advertising that is broadcast directly into a person's consciousness.

becoming like animals. D. Christian in "Big History" describes the processes of collective learning that contributed to the progressive development of humanity:

Other species hunted or obtained food using a set of knowledge and skills that remained virtually unchanged from generation to generation. People did this by becoming more and more aware of their environment because they exchanged and accumulated information about plants, animals, seasons, and terrain³⁰².

In his opinion, it was "collective learning that led human communities from generation to generation to become more skillful and successful in hunting and gathering"³⁰³. It is this feature that undergoes changes in most dystopias, as a result of which society in many cases does not develop and does not expand its habitat and capabilities. Thus, in "The Slynx" all inventions "come down" from above, which also does not motivate ordinary people to invent something new. In "Shchast'e", most people are engaged in a routine that matters only to themselves, and not to society, they recycle cultural and everyday achievements of the past, and without inventing anything, since science is prohibited.

Conclusion

Zhang Yixian, analyzing Sorokin's work, notes that "the futurological world is formed by synthesizing the Russian past, in particular the Middle Ages, and the Soviet totalitarian era, with the addition of some attributes of post-industrial civilization"³⁰⁴. In our opinion, this statement is true for many Russian dystopian novels of the 21st century. The most complex example of mixing eras seems to us to be works in which the most distant realities along the time axis are adjacent, which coexist in a single space.

Since humanity is deprived of the opportunity to develop, it cannot create something new: people, finding themselves in non-standard conditions, are not able to

³⁰² Christian D. Big History. Between Nothing and Everything / trans. A.D. Gromova. M., 2018. P. 170.

³⁰³ Ibid.

³⁰⁴ Zhang Yixian *Obraz velikoy russkoy steny v tvorchestve V. G. Sorokina* // Vestnik TGGPU. 2022. № 1 (67). P. 186.

establish a new way of life, therefore they partially or completely copy one of the previous social structures preserved in memory. An example are the districts of "Shchast'e". Copying individual time periods in different spaces of one city also indicates fragmentation within society, discord in society, and the distance of people from each other.

In other situations, the circumstances of the world and the fragmentary nature of the preserved cultural and historical memory do not allow us to completely recreate a certain model of society, and therefore it is assembled from pieces of different eras and cultures, like a puzzle. The world of "The Slynx" can serve as an illustration: the ruler of the city is not sufficiently educated, his knowledge is fragmentary, and the only way out for him is to introduce norms and laws that he knew or read in books.

In the third variation, people are forced or intentionally returned to a certain format of life and call everything with old words already existing in the language. Examples include "Transhumanism Inc."

Thus, the syncretism of eras is a consequence of the partial loss of cultural and historical memory.

§ 2.4. Books as carriers of collective and individual memory in dystopia

The image of the book has previously become the object of analysis by literary scholars, for example, A.N. Vorob'eva, S.G. Shishkina, O.N. Turysheva, Volkov V.V., Volkova N.V., N.M. Purcakina³⁰⁵. The authors analyze the motives for avoiding, destroying and sacralizing books, and some of the functions that this object has.

Books in everyday life serve the function of storing and transmitting information, including memories of the past. However, in the conditions of a dystopian post-apocalypse, their function of transmitting information is partially lost, but the image of

³⁰⁵ Vorob'eva A.N. Kniga kak personazh antiutopicheskikh syuzhetov 20 veka // *Izvestiya Samarskogo nauchnogo centra RAN*. 2008. № 6–2. P. 211–216; Shishkina S.G. Koncept "kniga" v zhanre literaturnoj antiutopii // *Kniga v sovremennom mire. Materialy mezhdunarodnoj nauchnoj konferencii*. 2013. P. 275–280; Turysheva O.N. Sozhzhenie knig: novaya semantika starogo motiva (na materiale romana V. Sorokina "Manaraga") // *Filologicheskij klass*. 2018. № 2 (52). P. 141–145; Volkov V.V., Volkova N.V. Motif structure of literary dystopias: language and book deprivation // *Gumanitarnye vedomosti TGPU im. L. N. Tolstogo*. 2020. № 4 (36). P. 61–74; Purcakina N.M. Koncept knigi v predstavlenii T. Tolstoj "Kys" i M. Elizarova "Bibliotekar" (opyt sopostavleniya) // *Sovremennye problemy nauki i obrazovaniya*. 2020. P. 250–257.

the book is complemented by other elements, and "the attitude towards the book is one of the main motives of the dystopian genre"³⁰⁶.

In "The Slynx", ordinary people were taught that old printed books (printed before the explosion) were contagious and carried disease. The orderlies take away everyone from whom books were found and "treat them, and people do not return after that treatment"³⁰⁷. In fact, books are not harmful to health, they are only dangerous for the ruler, since the people who read think, learn to think critically and learn more than is necessary to keep them in obedience and within the city. For the authorities, a book in the hands of a darling is a "disease" that makes a person different from those around him, marginalizes him, like Benedict. Kudeyar Kudeyarych is aware of this situation: "The disease is not in books, dear man, but in our heads"³⁰⁸. The authorities seek to appropriate information and act as the only source of "wisdom".

In the novel "Day of the Oprichnik" there is also a tendency to burn books: "We <...> only burn harmful books. Obscene and seditious. <...> I look into the fire. And 'The Idiot' and 'Anna Karenina' are burning there"³⁰⁹. The clairvoyant considers only business books useful: "on carpentry, stoves, construction, electrical, shipbuilding"³¹⁰, and so on. In Russian classics, she sees a danger for the future development of the current way of life: "the purpose of burning books is to limit time (isolating Russia from the historical past)"³¹¹.

A similar situation with books is observed in the early works of the genre. In "Brave New World", children were taught to dislike books at an early age because they did not encourage people to buy new games, clothes, and emotions. Also, books are synonymous with impermanence: "...we have to pay this price for stability. <...>. We sacrificed high art"³¹². In "Fahrenheit 451", books are compared to a "loaded gun"³¹³ and must be destroyed.

³⁰⁶ Purcakina N.M. Koncept knigi v predstavlenii T. Tolstoj "Kys" i M. Elizarova "Bibliotekar" (opyt sopostavleniya) // *Sovremennye problemy nauki i obrazovaniya*. 2020. P. 252.

³⁰⁷ Tolstaya T.N. *The Slynx*. M., 2020. P. 51.

³⁰⁸ Ibid. P. 206.

³⁰⁹ Sorokin V.G. *Day of the Oprichnik* M., 2017. P. 130–132.

³¹⁰ Ibid. P. 130.

³¹¹ Zhang Yixian *Obraz velikoy russkoy stenyi v tvorchestve V. G. Sorokina* // *Vestnik TGGPU*. 2022. № 1 (67). P. 189.

³¹² Huxley A. *Brave New World* / trans. from eng. O. Sorokin. M., 2017. P. 114.

In "The Slynx", due to the widespread opinion that books are contagious, people avoid them and get rid of them: "... my father nevertheless found an old printed book and burned it. He was not as afraid of infection as he was of orderlies"³¹⁴. Only a small part of people keep them. Book burning is also a common theme in works of this genre. Books were also burned in R. Bradbury's novel "Fahrenheit 451". "The Slynx" is also related to this text by the appearance of a semantic neologism in relation to the change in the type of activity of people with the profession, respectively, of a fireman (burns books and sometimes the people who keep them at Bradbury) and an orderly (kills people for keeping books at Tolstaya).

The fate of books also befalls other monuments of history, culture and art, and even people. In "The Slynx", thinking citizens who keep "old printed" books are killed by orderlies; Brave New World describes a period called the "campaign against the Past"³¹⁵, during which

Museums were closed, historical monuments were blown up (most of them, thank Ford, had already been razed to the ground by the Nine Years' War), books published before the year 150 of the time of Our Ford were confiscated. <...> There were, for example, structures called pyramids³¹⁶.

In the Strugatskys' novel "Hard to Be a God", literate people who oppose the authorities are destroyed:

You understand, times are difficult... We are catching runaway literates <...>
 What would I do? I would ask directly: literate? Stab you! Do you write poems?
 On stake! Do you know the tables? Damn, you know too much! <...>
 – Do we cut some literate people, teach others?
 Father Kin grinned.

³¹³ Bradbury R. Fahrenheit 451. M., 2019. P. 88.

³¹⁴ Tolstaya T.N. The Slynx. M., 2020. P. 51.

³¹⁵ Huxley A. Brave New World / trans. from eng. O. Sorokin. M., 2017. P. 74.

³¹⁶ Ibid. P. 74.

– Literacy is not the enemy of the king, - he said. - The enemy of the king is a literate dreamer, a literate doubter, a literate disbeliever!³¹⁷

The trend towards banning/destruction/absence of books in dystopias is popular, but is not a necessary feature of this genre. This can be attributed to the "memory of the genre", to the authors' elementary reflection on the declining interest in books in real life and an attempt to predict the development of the situation, or as a sign that in such societies the rulers do not need a thinking and literate population, which books can make them.

Another new characteristic of a book in a dystopia is its inaccessibility. The main character of "The Slynx" Benedict exalts the book like an idol "... my unspeakable treasure! life, the road, the expanses of the sea, blown by the wind, a golden cloud, a blue wave..."³¹⁸, "You alone will not deceive, you will not hit, you will not offend, you will not leave!"³¹⁹. For their sake, he is ready to kill, lie, they become the meaning of his whole life for him, drive him crazy and ultimately turn him into "The Slynx".

In "The Slynx", for the above reasons, old printed books are kept secret from everyone (under the bed, in clothes). Many books are kept only by the head of the city, Fyodor Kuzmich, and by his father-in-law, Benedikt Kudeyar Kudeyarovich, whose position as Chief Sanitary allowed him to confiscate all the books from the "sick": "My father-in-law has a whole warehouse of old printed books <...> and along the walls there are shelves, shelves, shelves, and on the shelves there are all books, books, books!"³²⁰. Rulers or people in high positions in a dystopia often have more information than ordinary citizens. Fyodor Kuzmich (the mayor of the city in the novel "The Slynx"³²¹), Mustafa Mond (the Resident World Controller for Western Europe in the novel «Brave New World»³²²), Guy Montag (the fireman from the novel "Fahrenheit 451"³²³) had

³¹⁷ *Strugatsky A.N., Strugatsky B.N. Hard to Be a God. M., 2022. P. 31, 32, 69.*

³¹⁸ *Tolstaya T.N. The Slynx. M., 2020. P. 239.*

³¹⁹ *Ibid. P. 245.*

³²⁰ *Ibid. P. 211.*

³²¹ "Human life is not enough to re-read everything!" (*Ibid. P. 318–319.*)

³²² "There are strange rumors about old forbidden books hidden in Mond's office, in a safe" (*Huxley A. Brave New World / trans. from eng. O. Sorokin. M., 2017. P. 50.*)

³²³ "...we have a whole library here" (*Bradbury R. Fahrenheit 451. M., 2019. P. 110.*)

large libraries. The last of the named heroes did not have a high enough position, and therefore he was exposed and persecuted.

In "The Slynx" a certain semblance of books continues to exist and multiply, but in handwritten format, in cursive and only those that were "written", or rather, rewritten and given to the people, by Fyodor Kuzmich. He takes passages out of context, uses words that are incomprehensible to the population, as a result of which the texts do not provide any useful or accessible information. Taking advantage of the inaccessibility of old printed books to the people, the head of the city takes credit for works created before the Explosion, for example, "In the Restaurant" and "The Pipe Sang on the Bridge..." by A. Blok, "Blizzard..." by B. Pasternak, "Roly-Poly" and many others. In this case, we observe the fact of the substitution of not only historical, but also cultural memory.

Books often describe realities that no longer exist or are inaccessible to people. The main character of "The Slynx" is a scribe, a well-read person for their society, who has no idea what some things and animals look like: "What do you think: what are bows? – Any girls in trouble?"³²⁴ or "What is a 'horse', don't you know? – It must be a mouse"³²⁵. In the latter situation, the hero tries to explain an incomprehensible word with the help of an animal known to him and even tries to substantiate his guess: "Well, what then: 'the horse runs, the earth trembles'? – So it's a big mouse. After all, once they start fiddling around, you won't be able to sleep another time"³²⁶. After marriage, he reads books in huge quantities, but does not absorb new information, does not become smarter or more cultured. Society has become too degraded to understand many ideas. The only skill Benedict acquired was to flaunt a beautiful word or mindlessly quote what he read. The fact is that the hero is not able to decode the information received. Even "the Oldener" Nikita Ivanovich understands this: "You essentially don't know how to read, the book is of no use to you, an empty rustle, a set of letters"³²⁷.

³²⁴ *Tolstaya T.N.* The Slynx. M., 2020. P. 48.

³²⁵ *Ibid.* P. 46.

³²⁶ *Ibid.* P. 46.

³²⁷ *Ibid.* P. 290.

O. Slavnikova writes the following about Benedict's behavior: "... reading has become the hero's daily need, it does not satiate, but only inflames the undeveloped mind"³²⁸.

Old printed books use too many words that the hero does not know and cannot understand correctly. Communication between past and present is broken, and even the presence of "the Oldeners" people cannot save the situation. Only the picture helps the hero understand his mistake: "... these animals are like a goat, but without a beard. The father-in-law said: this is a horse. Horse. Yeah. This means this is what a horse is"³²⁹. The inhabitants of Huxley's world were in a similar situation. Their ruler says that "they would not understand 'Othello'"³³⁰, they are no longer able to understand him.

The characters cannot imagine everyday things left in the past. Works of fiction do not convey memories of the past or allow full understanding of the information received about unfamiliar realities.

In the novel "The Slynx" a special type of book appears: the book of Genesis or the main book. It is a supreme creation that must help the hero learn important information or higher knowledge. Benedict learns about her from the Oldener" Nikita Ivanovich: "... moral laws <...> are predetermined, drawn with a diamond cutter on the tablets of conscience! Inscribed in fiery letters in the Book of Being!"³³¹. After this conversation, the main character begins to be tormented by sacred questions, and books become his obsession. He begs for it from the stoker. "Give me the book", Benedict whined. "Don't wait, give me the book!"³³²; looks from the neighbors: "And who grabbed the main book and is holding it, the main one, where it says how to live?.. But Klop Efimych had books with letters that weren't ours"³³³; thinks about it in Fyodor Kuzmich's mansion: "... maybe there's somewhere... maybe there's a treasured little book!.. where it says how to live!"³³⁴; and even at the execution of Nikita Ivanovich he asks him: "Where can I look for this book? <...> This book you were talking about!

³²⁸ Slavnikova O. Pushkin s malen'koj bukvy // Novyj Mir. M., 2001. № 3. URL: https://magazines.gorky.media/novyi_mi/2001/3/pushkin-s-malenkoj-bukvy.html (Accessed: 13.07.2022).

³²⁹ Tolstaya T.N. The Slynx. M., 2020. P. 212.

³³⁰ Huxley A. Brave New World / trans. from eng. O. Sorokin. M., 2017. P. 114.

³³¹ Tolstaya T.N. The Slynx. M., 2020. P. 181.

³³² Ibid. P. 290.

³³³ Ibid. P. 265.

³³⁴ Ibid. P. 319.

Where is it hidden? What now, admit it! Where is it told how to live!"³³⁵. For Benedict, the search for this book, taken literally, becomes the meaning of life. He does not realize the simple truth that the Book of Being³³⁶ in the speech of "the Oldener" is something sacred and non-physical. Nikita Ivanovich understands the darling's ignorance and therefore replies that he "hasn't mastered the alphabet yet" to read this book. Wild man"³³⁷.

The book with sacred knowledge implies a threat. Benedict, in pursuit of the Book of Being, changes beyond recognition; it becomes an obsession that brings a tragic ending for the hero.

Thus, the frequently encountered image of a book in dystopia speaks of people's loss of the ability to store and transmit information. Books carry a real or imaginary physical threat, mental danger. They can act as a source of wisdom, and some of them – sacred knowledge. Books are often difficult to obtain and are therefore revered and protected by those who have them. A book can act as a powerful information weapon through which collective memory is replaced.

Limited space in dystopian novels has long been noted by many researchers. Getting rid of books, banning them, burning books and literate people is a limitation of time and memory. In this case, we can talk about the limitation of the entire chronotope in dystopia.

³³⁵ Tolstaya T.N. *The Slynx*. M., 2020. P. 347.

³³⁶ The Book of Being (the main book) in Benedict's speech is written with a lowercase letter, and, for example, the position of Nikita Ivanovich "the Head Stoker" is always with a capital letter (but only when talking about the Former in this position. In Benedict's fantasies about himself in this place the word is used with a lowercase letter: "Father stoker, Benedict Karpych" (Ibid. P. 21.) This fact indicates that the capital letter is a sign of respect for Benedict, and that, despite desperate attempts to find out something about these books and find them, he does not feel due respect for these books.

³³⁷ Ibid. P. 290.

Chapter 3. Mythological, fairy-tale and fantastic elements in Russian dystopia of the 21st century

Fantastic elements have been present in dystopian fiction since the genre's formation, and we notice fairy-tale and mythological elements in later novels, but their use has become more frequent in the 21st century. In this chapter, we examine the intertextual connections of Russian literary dystopia with novels of other genres, and also analyze the memory of the genre, that is, the connection with previous works. All this, according to the concept of A. Erll and A. Nünning, is the *memory of literature*.

The world we live in is characterized by dynamics, relentless development and forward movement. The world of the dead in literature is a world of statics, the endless flow of frozen time, the absence of change and any development. However, besides these two worlds, the history of religion knows one more: the state of afterlife or bardo, "being in an intermediate state after death"³³⁸. Its study has traditionally been within the scope of thanatology, "the study of the essence and causes of death"³³⁹. At the beginning of the 20th century, the concept of "thanatology" was used mainly in the medical field, but R.L. Krasil'nikov notes the gradual transition of this term into the field of literary criticism and defines research tasks: "... the study of thanatological issues and thanatological elements at all levels of a literary work"³⁴⁰. A. Hansen-Löwe introduced the concept of "thanatopoetics"³⁴¹ to depict death in literature.

The functions of the other world were described in detail by V.Y. Propp in his works on Russian fairy tales, which laid the foundation for a large number of studies in this area. The scientist identified important structural elements of the other world, such as assistant, gift, border, forest, guard, crossing and carrier (guide, driver, counselor) and others; defined the concept of "magical objects" and their typology.

³³⁸ Bardo // Enciklopedicheskiy slovar'. URL: <https://dic.academic.ru/dic.nsf/es/70085/%D0%91%D0%90%D0%A0%D0%94%D0%9E> (Accessed: 23.11.2022).

³³⁹ Thanatology // Bol'shaya enciklopediya v 20-ti tomah. SPb., 1904. Vol.18. P. 278.

³⁴⁰ Krasil'nikov R.L. Obraz smerti v literaturnom proizvedenii: modeli i urovni analiza. Vologda, 2007. P. 29

³⁴¹ Hansen-Löwe A.A. Mandel'shtam's Thanatopoetics // Readings in Russian Modernism. M., 1993.

The connection between dystopia and fairy tales is shown in the works of A.V. Timofeeva, E.D. Koverzneva and T.V. Kazarina, D.A. Sirotkina³⁴².

§ 3.1. Ghosts in the novel "Shchast'e" ("Happiness")

One of the obligatory attributes of the afterlife state are apparitions and ghosts, which have been spoken of in mythology and poetry since ancient times, and which are the object of numerous studies.

According to Ushakov's explanatory dictionary, a ghost is "the apparition of a dead or absent creature, which, according to superstitious people and with morbid fantasy, allegedly appears to be it"³⁴³. As a rule, ghosts are restless souls who are kept on earth by unfinished business, sudden, early or violent death.

Modern ideas about these creatures are based, rather, on a large number of horror films in which they appear in the material world as disembodied spirits, but their appearance can also occur mentally, in the imagination. These creatures can be neutral, positive or negative towards those who see them. In some cases, ghosts come to ask the living for help to "move on to another world".

In "Shchast'e", the characters call these creatures differently: in addition to the generally accepted ghosts and apparitions, there are also shadows, horrors, dead bodies, corpses, dead people, *they* and *these* – the last words stand out with a certain intonation. In Chebotareva's novel they are quite real and recognized by society.

Ghosts in this artistic world are victims of violent death and "come" to their killers or to those who betrayed them, which is quite consistent with generally accepted ideas: "...ghosts appeared: long-time victims among extreme sports enthusiasts and company personnel"³⁴⁴. Due to this interesting feature, it is very easy to find out whether the death was natural: "If he was really killed, <...> we will soon find out about

³⁴² Timofeeva A.V. Zhanrovoe svoeobrazie romana-antiutopii v russkoj literature 60–80-h godov XX veka: avtoref. dis. ... kand. fil. nauk. M.: RUDN, 1995. 18 p. Koverzneva E.D., Kazarina T.V. A skazka budet vpered (o fol'klornyh kornyah antiutopii Isiguro Kadzuo "Ne otpuskaj menya") // Mezhdunarodnaya molodyozhnaya nauchnaya konferenciya "XV Korolyovskie chteniya", posvyashchyonnaya 100-letiyu so dnya rozhdeniya D. I. Kozlova. V 2 t. Samara, 2019. Vol.2. P. 795–796. Sirotkina D.A. Ot skazki k antiutopii: opyt sopostavleniya hudozhestvennogo teksta i kinoteksta (po p'ese E. Shvarca "Drakon" i ekranizacii M. Zaharova "Ubit' drakona") // Sbornik tezisov dokladov nauchno-prakticheskoy konferencii studentov Kurganskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta. Vypusk XXII. — Kurgan, 2021. P. 163–164.

³⁴³ Ghost // Tolkovyj slovar' russkogo yazyka v 4-h tomah / pod redakciej prof. D. N. Ushakova. M., 1939. Vol.3. P. 772.

³⁴⁴ Figl'-Migl' Shchast'e (Happiness). SPb., 2013. P. 7.

it. - How? - As usual. There will be a ghost"³⁴⁵. They do not appear in the material world, but only in the human consciousness ("in the head"), in dreams.

Regular appearances of "horror creatures" bring people to a terrible mental state: "... he clung to me until I was bruised and sweated so much that his smell stuck to the linen, furniture, walls of the room, my clothes"³⁴⁶.

The presence of this kind of "punishment" for murder led to changes in some professions: "Snipers knew anatomy very well, many of them were practicing doctors"³⁴⁷. Snipers do not kill, but maim people, because if he makes a mistake and kills, then ghosts will haunt him.

Despite the disembodiment of apparition and their appearance only "in the head", they can influence the physical body of their "victim": the person "was ready to talk about anything, just not to look at his ripped open stomach. <...> He was killed by a ghost"³⁴⁸ (our italics - M.R.).

Since the problem of ghosts and deaths from them is widespread, people are in demand to see them and help get rid of them. They are called Odd-eyed, that is, those suffering from heterochromia, and they are professionally engaged in exorcism of ghosts:

— WHAT IF SOMEONE TEARS OFF THIS HEAD?

— Then I'll become a ghost. <...>

— AND THEN?

— And then the Odd-Eyed One will come³⁴⁹.

They are present in all parts of the former St. Petersburg, and in most cases are received by residents cordially and with great respect. In a certain situation, the Odd-Eyed One can act as a guide through an (other) world unfamiliar to the heroes.

³⁴⁵ *Figl'-Migl' Shchast'e* (Happiness). SPb., 2013. P. 235.

³⁴⁶ Ibid. P. 7.

³⁴⁷ Ibid. P. 41.

³⁴⁸ Ibid. P. 23.

³⁴⁹ Ibid. P. 270–271.

§ 3.2. "Shchast'e" ("Happiness"): four spaces and magical manifestations

Let us consider the world of the dystopian novel "Shchast'e" within the framework of thanatopoetics and the theme of afterlife.

The most obvious sign of the bardo in this art world is the presence of ghosts. But these are not the only manifestations in the novel.

To identify other signs of post-mortem, it is necessary to analyze the space and characters of the novel "Shchast'e". We can conditionally divide the entire topos of the artistic world of the work into four types: city, jungle, cemeteries and the Other Side.

St. Petersburg is fragmented: part of the territory is inhabited by people, part is overgrown with jungle. The Central District (City), Petrogradskaya Side and Vasilyevsky Island are preserved in a relatively decent and clean condition, however, most of the described "inhabited" areas of the city take on an extremely unpleasant image: people and streets stink, there is garbage everywhere, flying on the asphalt, lying in heaps, floating in puddles: "My native shore greeted me <...> with a stench, mountains of garbage"³⁵⁰, "rotten dirty odors were so strong that they seemed materialized, lying everywhere like rotting carrion"³⁵¹. On Vasilyevsky Island there live humanists (Pharisees) who "did not take care of their island"³⁵², as a result of which "the beautiful buildings not only fell into disrepair, they ceased to be buildings and turned into outlandish creatures"³⁵³. Places where people live take on an abandoned and unkempt appearance, creating the impression that no one lives there.

This space is opposed by the Jungle – the superiority of nature over technology, brick and concrete. The jungle area is vast – most are former industrial zones. They are considered dangerous and scary: many who went into the jungle did not return, and only stalkers can guide them through them. This space looks the most alive and real:

Only the trees growing here had the right to be called trees, only here the squirrels looked like real squirrels <...> The hummocks and stones do not let us

³⁵⁰ *Figl'-Migl'* Shchast'e (Happiness). SPb., 2013. P. 24.

³⁵¹ *Ibid.* P. 60.

³⁵² *Ibid.* P. 21.

³⁵³ *Ibid.* P. 209.

pass <...> The jungle will do whatever they want, they will help us walk, they will drown us in the swamp <...> I just felt someone's presence and couldn't tell who it was or what it wanted³⁵⁴,

and they also contain wild boars, foxes, snakes and other animals. One can even note the difference in the sounds that fill the city and the jungle: the hero says that on Vasilyevsky "it was even quieter than in the City"³⁵⁵, and in the jungle "the harmonious hum of life was knocking on my ears, blood, stupefied by the sun and smells, was pounding from inside; the wind was blowing around, crackling, whistling"³⁵⁶.

The third important space is cemeteries. The novel mentions five cemeteries: Bolsheokhtinskoye, Volkovskoye, Catholic, Bogoslovskoye and Smolenskoye, but only the last two become the scene of action. The Smolensk cemetery is still in use for its intended purpose, but the Bogoslovskoye cemetery has been "captured" by the jungle and is used as a summer headquarters by anarchists (like Bolsheokhtinskoye)³⁵⁷.

The cemetery, like the Jungle, evokes both admiration and fear in people. The Fig-seer feels calm on it: "Look around. What a beauty! <...> I often walk around Smolensky. And I always go to funerals. But it's just more pleasant to walk: you breathe easily, you think well"³⁵⁸, and the main character describes it as follows: "memorable freshness" and "tireless life"³⁵⁹. The fly, a character with no education, is afraid of the cemetery: "I can't sleep here! - he sobbed. «It just seems like these guys will crawl out of the ground"³⁶⁰. Before the trip, Mucha did not know what a cemetery, a coffin and a funeral were. In their part of the city, they dissolve the bodies of the dead in sulfuric acid, which, in their opinion, is "prevention against creepy things"³⁶¹.

³⁵⁴ *Figl'-Migl'* Shchast'e (Happiness). SPb., 2013. P. 177, 177, 179, 193.

³⁵⁵ Ibid. P. 20.

³⁵⁶ Ibid. P. 179.

³⁵⁷ The function of the cemetery as a refuge is found in the story of V.G. Korolenko "In bad company".

³⁵⁸ *Figl'-Migl'* Shchast'e (Happiness). SPb., 2013. P. 133.

³⁵⁹ Ibid. P. 237.

³⁶⁰ Ibid. P. 135.

³⁶¹ Ibid. P. 133.

The main character puts the Jungle, cemeteries and the Other Side on a par, since they have "some kind of eerie power"³⁶². Cemeteries, like the Jungle, represent a certain natural force fighting for existence in spite of concrete and stone, as evidenced by the legend of the Catholic cemetery "between Ohta and Finban"³⁶³:

In ancient times, it was razed to the ground and a factory was built on that site. But after a time of troubles, when all that was left of that plant was just a chimney, and everything around turned into a Jungle, the Catholic Cemetery - devastated, destroyed so that there was no trace of it - grew in its former form through the industrial ruins. They tried to liquidate it a second time, but only a couple of years later the Catholic cemetery was again in its place - a pearl from under the ground³⁶⁴.

However, the power of the Jungle and the cemetery are similar forces, but not friendly. According to the stalker, "graves and shrines <...> are great enemies and an insult for the Jungle"³⁶⁵.

In the classical view, a cemetery is a space for the dead and a place of mourning for the living. People come to the cemetery to "visit" the dead, remember them, and "consult". The cemetery chronotope is very important for the concept of afterlife, because the cemetery is the border space where finite earthly life passes into eternity. World literature provides examples of encounters between the living and beings in the afterlife, for example, in "Interview with the Vampire" (1976) by E. Rice, "The Phantom of the Opera" (1909) by G. Leroux, "The Graveyard Book" (2008) by N. Gaiman, "Lincoln in the Bardo" (2017) by G. Saunders.

The cemetery chronotope in the text is characterized by such features as time dilation, descriptions in dark, even gloomy tones, and a depressive mood. However, in "Shchast'e" these markers are absent, and many people enjoy walking there; people live

³⁶² *Figl'-Migl' Shchast'e* (Happiness). SPb., 2013. P. 269.

³⁶³ *Ibid.* P. 142.

³⁶⁴ *Ibid.* P. 142.

³⁶⁵ *Ibid.* P. 180–181.

on them. Cemeteries in this novel can be divided into three types. The first is a cemetery that has retained its purpose – burial of the dead (Smolenskoye). The second is a shelter (Bogoslovskoye and Bolsheokhtinskoye). And the third is an infernal force that is in confrontation with the Jungle (Catholic). One of the characters notes the different "strength" of cemeteries: "... the spirits of wild nature are the strongest, only those from the cemetery are stronger, and even then not always and not in every cemetery"³⁶⁶.

Thus, the space of cemeteries and the Jungle is part of the world of the living, and the space of the city has many signs of the world of the dead.

While working, the main character Odd-Eyed ends up on the Other Side, in a certain metaphysical reality, and his physical body is in an unconscious state. The transition from "this" reality to "that" is not described in any way by the author; the hero suddenly falls out of the chronotope of the narrative and finds himself in something completely different. Everyone has the other side and each has their own, and you can even lose it: "I clearly remembered *his* Other Side"³⁶⁷ (our italics - M.R.), "I was even afraid that he <...> would lose the Other Side at all"³⁶⁸. This space can be a building or an open space. In some situations it is described in sufficient detail:

...empty space, not a single desire, not a trace of a dream, not a fragment of memory; nothing but fear (but fear was somehow powerless, lifeless, worthless) <...> on the Other Side there is a different cemetery. Those that I visited in reality were full of a peculiar, but life, this weighs on me with the terrible weight of a silent, dead emptiness. There is no one and nothing here - neither in the coffins, nor above the coffins, nor in the crowns of trees that are not trees³⁶⁹.

³⁶⁶ *Figl'-Migl'* Shchast'e (Happiness). SPb., 2013. P. 193.

³⁶⁷ Ibid. P. 42.

³⁶⁸ Ibid. P. 105.

³⁶⁹ Ibid. P. 283.

We can assume that the other side is the human subconscious, and the appearance of ghosts in it is the visualization of feelings of guilt and conscience that gain power over a person.

The second important point is people's attitude towards life and their pastime.

In the artistic world of the novel "Shchast'e" on Vasilyevsky Island, various secret associations are very popular among the Pharisees, such as "the Society of Neuropaths", "the League of Hermeneutics", and "the Gestalt Search Committee"³⁷⁰. Their meetings are an endless circle of aimless discussions without any decisions or actions. This kind of space creates an atmosphere of slow decay and constant staticity, the inability to change anything.

On the Petrograd side, the illusion of a vibrant and fashionable life is created, however, the "dudes" inhabiting these territories "denied their future, the future as such, denied the movement of life in general"³⁷¹, they run away from their parents from the City to lead an idle life without responsibility for business and family. However, their existence is still monotonous and boring. At a certain point, they are forced to return to their father's house, and their place is taken by new "fugitives", therefore "they did not grow old, but were replaced by a new generation"³⁷².

Based on all of the above, it is difficult to say that the people in this work are part of the world of the living. Rather, they are in a state of post-mortem: not considering themselves dead, they do not develop, but only exist in an eternal cycle of their own problems and fears.

There is another interesting feature in this novel that connects the residents of the city with some otherworldly forces. The topic of dialogue is sometimes curses and damage. A curse is "an oral wish for harm or harm to another person"³⁷³, and damage is "... in popular belief, a disease caused by witchcraft"³⁷⁴. According to popular belief, to perform these rituals one needs a fetish (a thing of a person-object). At the beginning of

³⁷⁰ *Figl'-Migl' Shchast'e* (Happiness). SPb., 2013. P. 221.

³⁷¹ *Ibid.* P. 232.

³⁷² *Ibid.* P. 232.

³⁷³ *McKim Donald K.* The Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms: trans. from eng. M., 2004. P. 319.

³⁷⁴ *Damage // Tolkovyj slovar' russkogo yazyka v 4-h tomah / pod redakciej prof. D. N. Ushakova. M., Vol.3. P. 616.*

the novel, a woman wants to curse the main character, and he himself helps her in this. For the second time, the village woman asks him to spoil another. The Odd-eyed

had no idea how damage was done. The objects on the table gave some idea of what to do, but they themselves did not know what to say. And I didn't know, but only knew (taking the scissors in one hand, the saucer in the other and splashing water alternately on the four cardinal points) that I shouldn't hesitate. It was then that I kindly remembered Alex, who fed me ancient poetry for free³⁷⁵.

By "ancient poetry" he means Sologub's poem "Net slovam peregovora...". This is not the first time that the Sologub's surname appears in the novel, and the choice of the poem is most likely due to the mystical content, which serves to create the verisimilitude of what is happening. The odd-eyed man also asks the woman to repeat "ora pro nobis" (that is, ora pro nobis – Latin "pray for us"), and he himself throws the nails of the "victim" into the fire. This whole picture is a parody of rituals of this kind.

There is a reference to "magic" in the structure of the novel. The titles of the chapters ("Now", "In an hour", "Towards the evening", "For the whole night") are part of a saying for fortune telling on cards, the full text of which is: "*Now, in an hour, what was and will be, on the road, on the threshold, by the evening, for the whole night, how will the matter end, how will the heart calm down, will put an end to everything*" (our italics - M.R.). "In an hour" and "by the evening" are separated by several more phrases. The chapter "In an hour" ends with the completion of the heroes' journey to another part of St. Petersburg, they are on their way home, and "By the evening" begins after an unknown amount of time "in someone else's bed"³⁷⁶. The author omits the path home itself, the return to his native threshold, and leaves the ending of the novel open, without telling the readers "how will the matter end". The novel ends with the phrase "Armageddon was yesterday"³⁷⁷, but it did not put an end to the world, and the main character did not find himself.

³⁷⁵ *Figl'-Migl'* Shchast'e (Happiness). SPb., 2013. P. 119.

³⁷⁶ Ibid. P. 203.

³⁷⁷ Ibid. P. 317.

§ 3.3. Specifics of magical objects in the novel "Shchast'e" ("Happiness")

V.Y. Propp described magical objects that have magical properties: a flying carpet, a self-assembled tablecloth, a flint, an ax that works by itself, and so on. According to the researcher, "these objects represent only a special case of an assistant"³⁷⁸, that is, their main function is to help the main character in his journey and achieve his goal. The method of obtaining such objects is also important: from animals, from nature, from elders, from the dead, from another world. In modern works we can also find pseudo-magical objects. They do not have magical properties, but help the main character.

In "Shchast'e" we also find things that help the heroes. The novel contains legends about the existence of real magical objects. The stalker who guides the main characters of "Shchast'e" through the jungle mentions that the beggars living across the Neva

They've been boiling cat bones all winter <...> They're looking for the invisible bone, baby. You put a bone in your pocket - and you are not there: neither underground, nor under the boundary, nor in the field, nor under the log, nor in the grass, nor in the hollow, nor in the ravines, nor in the holes, do you understand? Go where you want, take what you want³⁷⁹.

A similar magical object is described in Russian folk tales³⁸⁰. According to the beliefs of our ancestors, a cat should be completely black; its bones are boiled exclusively in a cast-iron cauldron at midnight for as many nights as it takes for all the bones to boil down. The remaining bone will be the one you are looking for. I.P. Sakharov notes that the seekers of this magical object are always left with nothing, since healers always have a reason why the bone was not found. The beggars of future St. Petersburg also cannot find the precious magical object.

³⁷⁸ Propp V.Y. Morphology of the Folktale. M., 1998. P. 277.

³⁷⁹ Figl'-Migl' Shchast'e (Happiness). SPb., 2013. P. 173.

³⁸⁰ Saharov I.P. Skazaniya russkogo naroda: v 2-h tomah. SPb., 1841. Vol.1. P. 165.

For the rituals that are mentioned in the novel (cursing and hexing), fetishes are needed – the things of the person on whom the action will be directed. To bring damage to a person, the main character uses the nails of a woman whom the customer wants to harm. Human nails are not a magical object, but V.Y. Propp notes that parts of animals, such as claws, hair, skins and teeth, "serve as a means of power over the animal"³⁸¹. We observe a similar situation within the framework of this ritual: burning nails gives some power over a person's life. To curse a person, you need something that belonged to him, that is, a pseudo-magical object.

Thus, in dystopias, magical and pseudo-magical objects are actively used, referring the reader to folklore traditions, which turn out to be part of the cultural memory preserved by the heroes.

§ 3.4. "Transhumanism Inc.": the image of "brains in a jar"

In the dystopia "Transhumanism Inc." brains are the rulers of the world, and living people are the "staff" serving them.

The image of a "brains in a jar" is quite new: it appears in the 20th century mainly in science fiction novels, along with the idea of a person achieving eternal life through scientific and technological progress, although earlier in folklore and literature there was an image of a "living head", which can be considered a predecessor of "brains in a jar". Heads that function while separated from the body were described by A.S. Pushkin in the poem "Ruslan and Ludmila" (1820), A.R. Belyaev in "Professor Dowell's Head" (1925), M.A. Bulgakov in "The Master and Margarita" (1967), M.G. Uspensky in "Tam, gde nas net (Where we are not)", V. Pelevin in "Empire V" (2006) and many other works.

The brain itself, stored and functioning in one or another vessel, is found in the novels of H.P. Lovecraft "The Whisperer in Darkness" (1931), H. Franke, "The Orchid Cage" (1961), F. Carsac "The Mountains of Destiny" (1966), E. Hamilton "Captain Future" (1940–1944), L. Niven "Becalmed In Hell" (1965), etc.

³⁸¹ Propp V.Y. Morphology of the Folktale. M., 1998. P. 278.

The topic of "brains in a jar" first appeared in science, then was reflected in culture, and in 1981, philosopher H. Putnam described the "Brain in a Vat"³⁸² thought experiment. The scientist discusses the problem of reality and subjective perception. He suggests that it is possible to separate the human brain from the body and place it in a nutrient solution, connecting the nerve endings to a supercomputer that will create the illusion of the previous world and transmit sensory impulses to the brain. The question Putnam poses is: would such a brain's sense of reality be similar to that of a living brain found in a human body? Many of the authors listed above raised a similar question in their works. Putnam asked another question: "Could it be that <...> the universe consists of automatic mechanisms servicing a barrel of brains and nervous systems?"³⁸³. An illustration of these arguments can be considered the film "The Matrix", which had a great influence on Pelevin.

In the novel "Transhumanism Inc." this idea is viewed from a different point of view: the brains realize that they live in an illusory world and successfully interact with reality. On the one hand, they function similarly to living people: they have earnings, pay taxes, have wives and children. They can even smell:

But for the tax office, a whole corner was allocated in the parents' bedroom: a black stand above the bed, where there were lenses, sensors and sensors, through which the inspectorate could make sure that dad really sees, touches and smells mom³⁸⁴.

On the other hand, most of the time they exist in an unreal world, they have some kind of wisdom, since they live a long time, observe numerous processes in society and have a lot of time for reflection, and therefore can be equated with some higher beings, standing above the world of the living. They are neither alive nor dead; These are ghosts that materialize for people only with the help of virtual reality glasses. They are called

³⁸² Putnam H. Brain in a vat // Razum, istina i istoriya. M., 2002. P. 14–37.

³⁸³ Ibid. P. 20.

³⁸⁴ Pelevin V.O. Transhumanism Inc. M., 2021. P. 57.

guest glasses and are characterized as "the keyhole to the world of bankers"³⁸⁵. Nevertheless, such a way of life is a claim, if not for immortality, then for a very long extension of one's existence in accordance with Descartes' idea: "I think, therefore I exist"³⁸⁶. Such an opportunity is in great demand, and all people strive to earn enough money to buy a place in the jar.

In the world created by Pelevin, the brain in the jar can feel even more than an ordinary person: "The most complex signals coming to the brain from the external network painted spaces of miracles <...> He can afford anything. Any taste sensations"³⁸⁷. But even the endless possibilities of illusion can be satiated: Goldenstern³⁸⁸ connects to the brain of the girl Manya in order to taste tastes, smell, want something, for example, marshmallows, through her body. Thus, the fantastic future of "Transhumanism Inc." gives a chance to prolong one's life, and gives very rich "brains" the opportunity not only to feel different tastes, but also to experience how another person feels them.

§ 3.5. "The Slynx": afterlife, death and ascension

The artistic world described by Tolstaya is as static and almost non-developing as those described above. The artistic space is limited to one city "on seven hills"³⁸⁹, and around there are "immense fields, unknown lands. In the north there are dense forests, windfalls, branches intertwined and not allowed to pass, thorny bushes cling to ports, branches are torn from the head"³⁹⁰, similar forests are found in Russian folk tales on the way to another world, and in author's works. There are mythological creatures in the world, and The Slynx is something terrible and supernatural.

There are three groups of heroes in the novel, one of which is the Formers and degenerators – people who miraculously survived the explosion, stopped aging

³⁸⁵ Pelevin V.O. *Transhumanism Inc.* M., 2021. P. 88.

³⁸⁶ Descartes R. *Discourse on the Method of Rightly Conducting One's Reason and of Seeking Truth in the Sciences.* M., 2011. — P. 108.

³⁸⁷ Pelevin V.O. *Transhumanism Inc.* M., 2021. P. 47, 97.

³⁸⁸ See paragraph 2.1.4.

³⁸⁹ Tolstaya T.N. *The Slynx.* M., 2020. P. 7.

³⁹⁰ *Ibid.* P. 7.

("Mother lived for two hundred and thirty years and three years in this world. And she did not grow old"³⁹¹), and some even acquired superpowers , for example, they can erupt the fire: "And then it will reveal the mouth, but how it will go: heyyyyyyyyyyyyxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxks And from his mouth, like a pillar, like the wind, fire came out, swirling, and entered the furnace"³⁹², "fire is being produced inside him"³⁹³. Such events and the presence of magical abilities also refer us to the idea that events do not take place in the material world. The little darlings have zoomorphic features: "horns, ears, and cockscombs"³⁹⁴, and the main character has a tail, which he considered normal all his life. At the moment of discovery of this defect in the body, the "Divine Comedy" is quoted: "In the midway of this our mortal life,/ I found me in a gloomy wood, astray / Gone from the path direct!"³⁹⁵. The poem and the first part, "Hell", begin with these lines, which can be understood as another sign of the "inanimate" world and the identification of the hero with Dante, who travels through the afterlife.

Eventually there is a gasoline explosion and a massive fire that destroys the city and all its inhabitants. Benedict and his predecessors, Nikita Ivanovich and Lev Lvovich, remain on the square:

- Listen, Levushka, give up all this, and let's renounce, let's soar?

- Let's!

The former bent their knees, held hands and began to rise into the air. Both laughed - Lev Lvovich squealed a little, as if he was afraid to swim in a cold place, and Nikita Ivanovich chuckled in a deep voice: ho-ho-ho. <...>

- Uh-uh, what are you doing?! – Benedict shouted, wiping himself.

- Nothing! – checked from above.

- Why didn't you burn?

³⁹¹ *Tolstaya T.N.* The Slynx. M., 2020. P. 16.

³⁹² *Ibid.* P. 78.

³⁹³ *Ibid.* P. 82. Nikita Ivanovich, one of the Oldeners, has this ability. It is he who strives to resurrect the old culture: he puts up pillars with the names of streets, creates a monument to Pushkin. In this case, his ability to breathe fire and the position of the Head Stoker are a metaphorical implementation of the idiom "keeper of the sacred fire", that is, culture.

³⁹⁴ *Ibid.* P. 153–154.

³⁹⁵ *Ibid.* P. 151.

- But I'm reluctant! No-o-ho-ta-ah!..
- So you didn't die, or what? Eh?.. Or died?..
- And understand as you know!.. .³⁹⁶

The final scene can be interpreted in different ways. Firstly, it symbolizes the transition from the posthumous stage to the final death phase: most of the population burned, and the two former ones left this world themselves, leaving Benedict alone in the ashes. Secondly, the ending can be interpreted as the Formers gaining true immortality. This is how B. Paramonov perceived it: "A completely Nabokovian ending, when it is not clear: either everyone died, or ascended to a new life"³⁹⁷.

§ 3.6. Fantastic creatures in the novel "The Slynx"

Fantastic creatures are an integral part of a number of folklore and literary genres: fairy tales, horror and fantasy. This is understandable: fairy tales, first of all, reflect the mythological views of different peoples, an attempt to explain the world around us, to warn the growing generation against dangers. Fantasy owes its origins largely to fairy tales and is often based on myths and legends. Horror films often use images of unreal creatures (monsters, ghosts, apparitions) as an element to frighten the reader. Science fiction also turns to the use of unreal creatures, such as aliens. If the fairy tale has existed since ancient times and, undoubtedly, underlies a large number of works, then horror, fantasy and science fiction are relatively young genres that date back to the Gothic novel of the late 18th century, and were formed only in the 20th century. The basis for creating unreal creatures is always images that already exist in real life or other genres: all creatures are anthropomorphic, zoomorphic, or embody phenomena found in nature.

The rare appearance of unrealistic creatures in dystopia can be found already in the 20th century, but this cannot be called a mandatory feature of the genre. So, for example, in A. Schmidt's novel "The egghead republic" (1957) people, centaurs,

³⁹⁶ Tolstaya T.N. The Slynx. M., 2020. P. 349–350.

³⁹⁷ Paramonov B.M. Russkaya istoriya nakonec opravdala sebya v literature // Sovremennaya literatura s Vyacheslavom Kuricynym. URL: <http://www.guelman.ru/slava/kis/paramonov.htm> (Accessed: 14.07.2023).

mutated butterflies and spiders with a modified human head coexist on Earth; In Makanin's story "Syur v Proletarskom rajone", a huge hand tried to catch an ordinary mechanic. A.V. Timofeeva notes that dystopia "often and willingly uses fantastic elements to achieve its goals"³⁹⁸. In dystopian novels of the 21st century, fantastic creatures are found much more often, which can be justified by genre contamination, the desire of the authors to interest a younger audience, accustomed to something unusual, new and, at times, dark and disturbing.

Unreal creatures are present in several of the novels we analyzed: "The Slynx". These new forms of life can be divided into two groups: neutral and aggressive (that is, negatively disposed towards humans). It should be noted that Tolstaya's novel is distinguished by the great variety of created fantastic creatures.

Among the analyzed works, fantastic creatures neutral towards humans are mentioned only in the artistic world of "The Slynx". Some mythological images in this novel were analyzed by S.M. Magomedrasulova and S.A. Mazanaev³⁹⁹. Researchers compare the reincarnates with the Greek Centaurs, the winged horse with Pegasus. For the Princess Bird Pauline, scientists have more parallels: the sirens from Homer's "Odyssey", the Firebird from Russian folk tales, the Swan Princess from Pushkin's "The Tale of Tsar Saltan", and the bird of paradise Gamayun from East Slavic mythology.

We can add a few more images to this list.

For example, a the forest spirit is described as follows:

...small like that. Maybe it will be up to my waist or up to my tits. It looks like it's all made of old hay, its eyes are glowing red, and there are hands on its feet. And he pats the ground with these palms and says: tyapa-tyapa, tyapa-tyapa, tyapa-tyapa... Oh, and I ran!.. I don't know how I ended up at home⁴⁰⁰.

³⁹⁸ Timofeeva A.V. Zhanrovoe svoeobrazie romana-antiutopii v russkoj literature 60–80-h godov XX veka: avtoref. dis. ... kand. fil. nauk: 10.01.01. — Moscow, 1995. P. 16.

³⁹⁹ Magomedrasulova S.M., Mazanaev S.A. Mythological images in the novel by T. Tolstaya "Slynx" // Mir nauki, kul'tury, obrazovaniya. — Gorno-Altajsk, 2018. № 2 (69). P. 591–593.

⁴⁰⁰ Tolstaya T.N. The Slynx. M., 2020. P. 11.

In this context, the forest spirit looks quite harmless and correlates with the image of the forest spirit – a protector and guardian of the forest. He often seeks to expel uninvited guests from the forest, for which he can make fun of them or even hide things. However, according to some sources, he can be cruel: "For cutting down trees, the forest spirit can even take a person's life"⁴⁰¹. The ability to change its appearance and height, as well as glowing eyes, are also often attributed to this creature.

"One of the most common <...> is the motif ' the forest spirit leads a man through the forest'"⁴⁰². The presence of wrong paths is also found in the novel, but the narrator does not associate it with the forest spirit: "The Chechen also spoke about the passions of the forest, about how to distinguish between paths: which are real, and which are just a hassle, green steam, a tow of grass, magic and obsession"⁴⁰³.

Among the neutral unreal creatures you can find two more birds: a blindie bird and a woodsucker.

The word "blindie bird" (in Russian sounds as [slepovran]) can be interpreted in two ways. On the one hand, ślepowron means night heron (translated from Polish). On the other hand, blindie bird is a blind raven, which follows from the roots "blind" and "raven" (in Russian sounds as [voron]). He lives in dark woods, has a "trumpet voice" and strong claws. However, the reader is not told about the aggressive behavior of this bird. The raven in culture appears to be "an ambivalent symbol of sin, on the one hand, but of wisdom and longevity, on the other"⁴⁰⁴. A.N. Afanasyev notes that "in the old days, crows enjoyed religious honor among the Slavs"⁴⁰⁵, and in fairy tales, crows are called birds of things, they often act as companions, wise helpers, and bring living and dead water. The blindie bird is mentioned in four chapters of the novel. In "Zhivete" Benedict "had an itch inside of FEELOSOPHY"⁴⁰⁶ and he asked the question central to philosophy and the novel: "Who am I?!..."⁴⁰⁷. Further in the chapter "Myslete", this bird

⁴⁰¹ *Krinichnaya N.A.* Leshij: totemicheskie istoki i polisemantizm obraza // *Russkaya mifologiya: mir obrazov fol'klora*. M., 2004. P. 268–269.

⁴⁰² *Ibid.* P. 299.

⁴⁰³ *Tolstaya T.N.* Op. cit. P. 13–14.

⁴⁰⁴ *Raven* // *Simvoly, znaki, emblemy*. Enciklopediya / *Telicyun V.L., Bagdasaryan V.E., Orlov I.B.* M., 2005. P. 85.

⁴⁰⁵ *Afanasyev A.N.* Poetry views of the Slavs on nature. M., 1865. Vol.1. P. 502.

⁴⁰⁶ *Tolstaya T.N.* *The Slynx*. M., 2020. P. 60.

⁴⁰⁷ *Ibid.* P. 63.

is mentioned during the funeral of Anna Petrovna, a thinking woman who was close to realizing the true state of affairs in the literature of their city. In "Tsi" Benedict is tormented because he does not know who else can take the books from, and in the previous chapter he killed a man because of a book. In this chapter, for the only time we observe a meeting between the hero and the Slepovran: "The Slepovran ruffled his head under his wing"⁴⁰⁸. In "Theta", the hero again returns to thinking about his own essence, wonders whether he is a muslin, wandering towards the side where the mole captive lives. This image, with deep meaning and ancient history, appears at important moments for the plot and turning points in Benedict's life.

Among the hostile creatures are mermaids and a whirlytooth fish.

The image of the mermaid in "The Slynx" completely coincides with the beliefs of our ancestors. The mermaid lives in the river,

at dawn he sings, weaves his water songs: at first he takes it low, deep: y, y, y, y, - then he takes it higher: ouaaa, ouaaa, - then hold on, keep your eyes open, otherwise it will drag you into the river, - and when the song starts to squeal: yeeh! yeeeh! - now run, man, without memory⁴⁰⁹.

In Slavic mythology, mermaids love singing, their "tendency to lure, captivate <...> kidnap people, kill, put to death"⁴¹⁰ is observed.

The whirlytooth fish is not described in the novel, but is definitely a dangerous creature: "But maybe I'm the only one. To see a vertex so close - that's how you, for example, - and stay alive"⁴¹¹. This refers the reader to Russian fairy tales, which feature a fish-whale, or fish-pike⁴¹², which is capable of swallowing a person whole.

⁴⁰⁸ *Tolstaya T.N.* The Slynx. M., 2020. P. 248.

⁴⁰⁹ *Ibid.* P. 14.

⁴¹⁰ *Vinogradova L.N., Tolstaya S.M.* K probleme identifikacii i sravneniya personazhej slavyanskoj mifologii // Slavyanskij i balkanskij fol'klor. M., 1994. P. 32.

⁴¹¹ *Tolstaya T.N.* Op. cit. P. 13.

⁴¹² *Afanasyev A.N.* Poetry views of the Slavs on nature. M., 1868. Vol.2. P. 151.

The most dangerous and terrible creature in the novel is, in fact, the *kis*. According to the main character, she lives in the dense forests in the north, sits in the trees and shouts "The Sly-y-y-y-ynx!": "A man will go into the forest like that, and she'll be on the back of his neck: hop! and the backbone with your teeth: crunch! - and with his claw he will find the main vein and tear it apart, and the whole mind will come out of the person"⁴¹³.

Various assumptions have been made regarding the origin of the name for Benedict's greatest fear. Most often they write about sound associations: "...The Slynx - scat - lynx - Rus'. Rus' is an unknown animal"⁴¹⁴ (in Russian sounds as [kys' - brys' - rys' - Rus']); "THE SLYNX - SCAT - LYNX - RUS', KIS, KOSH!"⁴¹⁵ (in Russian sounds as [kys' - brys' - rys' - Rus' – kis - kysh]). N. Eliseev examines the emerging series of words in more detail: "The result is a strange predator from the feline breed: gentle as a kitty, disgusting as a shoot, predatory as a lynx and swift as a scat, and Russian, of course, like Rus"⁴¹⁶.

The Slynx appears in the hero's thoughts during unstable periods of Benedict's life, reminiscent of paranoia, or in moments of philosophical impulses, when he is left alone with his thoughts and fears:

The Slynx is... She. That's what it means. And not any FEELosophy <...> Phew... That's what she does, the Slynx, that's what she does to you from afar, that's how she sniffs, smells, fumbles <...> the Slynx looks at your back⁴¹⁷.

The Slynx, unlike the blind crow, does not appear in the novel in physical form, because she does not exist in the form in which Benedict introduces her at the beginning of the novel. The Slynx is the subconscious fear of the residents of Fedor-Kuzmichsk before their inner essence. At the end of the work, Tolstaya reveals this point:

⁴¹³ Tolstaya T.N. *The Slynx*. M., 2020. P. 7.

⁴¹⁴ Paramonov B.M. *Russkaya istoriya nakonec opravdala sebya v literature // Sovremennaya literatura s Vyacheslavom Kuricynym*. URL: <http://www.guelman.ru/slava/kis/paramonov.htm> (Accessed: 14.07.2023).

⁴¹⁵ Eliseev N. *Recenziya na "Kys"* Tat'yany Tolstoj // *Novaya russkaya kniga*. 2000. № 6. URL: <http://old.guelman.ru/slava/kis/eliseev.htm> (Accessed: 15.07.2023).

⁴¹⁶ Ibid.

⁴¹⁷ Tolstaya T.N. *The Slynx*. M., 2020. P. 110.

You in general... you... you... you are a bastard, that's who you are!!! - Benedict shouted, getting scared himself - the word would fly out and you wouldn't catch it; I was scared, but shouted. - The Slynx! The Slynx!

"Me?.. Me?.." the father-in-law laughed and suddenly unclenched his fingers and stepped back. - The designation has come out... The Slynx is you⁴¹⁸.

Conclusion

We analyzed a number of images of fantastic creatures, neutral and destructive, but physical and mental monsters are only an external manifestation of the internal nightmares of the heroes, even if this dystopia contains the motif of monsters that destroyed the world. Dystopia is first and foremost a story about people.

In T. Tolstaya's novel, at the beginning of the novel, the Slynx is an external enemy living in the forests outside the city, but at the end this word metaphorically refers to the main character Benedict.

Man was also a monster in the dystopia of the 20th century: in Zamyatin's novel this is indicated by the Great Operation, during which the part of the brain responsible for fantasy is cut out; for Huxley, it is growing children in test tubes and programming people from childhood; in Zamyatin and Orwell – cruel torture, constant surveillance of the heroes. Despite the fact that people do not change their appearance in these novels, they are internally monstrous.

It is people who give birth to the world of dystopia, create hell on Earth, thanks to human inventions mutants and other "evil spirits" appear. In modern works, the depiction of the essence of a person reaches a different semantic level. Writers depict real monsters who act as a mirror of the disfigured human soul. F. Nietzsche wrote: "...man is the most cruel of all animals"⁴¹⁹. Within the framework of our research, man is the most terrible monster and the creator of all others.

⁴¹⁸ Tolstaya T.N. *The Slynx*. M., 2020. P. 337.

⁴¹⁹ Nietzsche F. *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* // *Izbrannyye proizvedeniya*.. SPb., 2003. P. 514.

Conclusion

Dystopia as a genre formed in response to utopia, but it continues to evolve, change, and react to sociocultural processes occurring in the world. The correlated problems of memory and artistic time present a particular interest in the study of 21st-century works in this genre.

The beginning of the dystopian fictional reality is usually based on a clearly time-localized event: the invention of new technology, war, revolution, etc. In the works we examined, there are three distinctly defined temporal periods: before, during, and after the pivotal moment.

In all dystopias, there is a complete or partial loss of historical memory about the events preceding the catastrophe. The degree of forgetting depends on the duration of the "new world's" existence, since new realities may be very different from previous ones. The part of information that is still preserved will eventually be lost or reduced to a bare minimum of "knowledge" about the past, which means nothing to the residents but gives benefits to the authorities. We observe a similar situation in "Day of the Oprichnik", "The Sugar Kremlin", "The Slynx", and "Transhumanism Inc." In these novels, in addition to the common feature of a long time passing since the pivotal moment, there is also a tendency to substitute memory, i.e., to falsify data about the past. This phenomenon was already evident in 20th century genre's works. Memory substitution becomes possible in a new world where there are no anchors for memory of the past. Children are raised in a new reality, which allows the state, over several generations, to control the minds of all residents who become impervious to thoughts and ideas "harmful" to the new authority.

The process of loss and substitution of memory is closely linked to the existence of books. The original function of books, storing and transmitting information (memory), is lost and transferred to other carriers, such as cell phones. Books, in turn, are subjected to burning and rewriting. The extermination of books and literate people equates to the destruction of memory, and thus, of time itself. In a world where space is

depicted as localized and marked by distinct boundaries, one can speak of a limitation of the chronotope as a whole.

In the worlds of novels whose events are far-fetched from the early 21st century, a new layer of historical memory is created, almost entirely replacing the past familiar to the reader.

The collective memory of events during the catastrophe is often lost or exists only partially, fragmentarily, preventing a complete understanding of the situation.

In post-apocalyptic conditions, creating a fundamentally new social order of the world is impossible, leading to partial or complete replication of certain structures or epochs of the past. As a result, there is a mixing of different epochs in one location. For instance, a society of the 22nd century might exist in a Neolithic state, while high-tech inventions coexist with medieval methods of torture.

For some 21st-century dystopian novels, themes of post-mortality and the depiction of the world of the dead are important, continuing the traditions of the 20th century. People do not live but exist somewhere on the border between life and death. For example, in the novel "Shchast'e", people and ghosts inhabit the same chronotope of afterlife: some as beings from the world of the living, others from the world of the dead.

On a material level, dystopia reveals magical objects of two types: actual magical and pseudo-magical, lacking any magical properties but aiding the hero. The types of characters, composition, and magical objects indicate its affinity to the fairy tale.

21st-century dystopias show a connection with other contemporary genres (or super-genres), such as science fiction, fantasy, horror, and zombie apocalypse, due to the presence of fantastical creatures and corresponding plot lines. Over time, this may become a peripheral characteristic of the genre.

The Russian dystopia of the 21st century retains most of the traits already present in the genre's works of the 20th century, but it also has new characteristic features that testify to its evolution. The category of fictional time takes on special significance, conveying new messages: for example, the mixing of features of different epochs allows writers to build a philosophical concept of the New Middle Ages or to predict a negative development scenario in the country and the world.

In summarizing the above, we can conclude that the thematic dominance in the dystopian novels of the 21st century we studied is the theme of the loss and substitution of collective memory. Authors working in different traditions address themes of erasure, falsification, or, conversely, spontaneous and "natural" loss of memory. Forgotten is not only the culture of the past but also the Catastrophe itself, which led to its loss. The future society, in the view of dystopian writers, is composed of randomly preserved fragments of previous epochs, making it highly eclectic. The authors of the texts we studied do not believe in the possibility of creating a fundamentally new society in the future, just as they do not believe in the future of "book" civilization. Painting this pessimistic picture, writers supplement it with elements of those genres of mass literature and folklore that can lend it an even more somber, "monstrous" hue. These are the main features of contemporary Russian dystopia, identified by us on a sufficiently broad and representative material of popular texts. These conclusions may soon need revision, as contemporary literature is a living, dynamic process, and the genre of dystopia does not lose its popularity.

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Annex 1

	Sorokin's dilogy	The Slynx	Shekast'e (Happiness)	Trans- humanism Inc.
Primitive society		✓		
The Middle Ages and the the Russian Tsardom (IX century - early 18th century)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Russian Empire (early 18th century – early 20th century)	✓	✓		✓
20th century – beginning of the 21st century	✓	✓	✓	✓
Future (XXI century+)	✓	✓	✓	✓