

Dystopian Worlds in Russian Postmodernism

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ABSTRACT

Postmodernism is not limited to being present in any kind of art, such as cinema, literature, music or television. This phenomenon is more global, existing as a separate worldview, philosophy, gradually taking mass forms, penetrating into the consciousness of society. And, as a result, the manifestation of this worldview in culture, art and other spheres of life. This article discusses the dystopian worlds of two famous postmodern writers like T. Tolstaya and V. Pelevin.

Postmodernism is the cumulative designation of trends in the cultural self-awareness of the developed countries of the West that have emerged over the past 25-30 years. Postmodernism literally means that which is after "modernity", or modernity. [1. p. 3]

However, the concept of "modernity" does not have a strict generally accepted definition. The source of "modernity" is seen either in the rationalism of the New Age, or in the Enlightenment with its belief in progress and reliance on scientific knowledge, or in the literary experiments of the second half of the 19th century, or in the avant-garde of the 10-20s. 20th century - accordingly, the countdown of "postmodernity" is also being conducted. The task is complicated by the fact that the term Postmodern refers to two different trends in the current culture. In order not to confuse them, one has to use two possibilities of Russian translation - "postmodernism" and "postmodernity". [2. p. 3]

The novel by T. Tolstoy "Kys" is the destruction of postmodernism from the inside, by means of the postmodern aesthetics itself, the understanding of the dead ends into which the total postmodern deconstruction leads. [6. p. 38]

The novel contains all the main signs of postmodernism. Its action takes place three hundred years after the Explosion (the outbreak of a nuclear war or some kind of global man-made disaster that led to a change in the biological forms of life on Earth and returned society, if not to prehistoric times, then certainly to the early Middle Ages). The protagonist Benedict is a clerk in the Workers' Izba, where the works created by "Big Murza" Fyodor Kuzmich are "whitewashed" - from "Kolobok" to Schopenhauer. By virtue of his professional activity, Benedict finds himself immersed in the postmodern situation of intertext: in his mind fragments of previous texts collide, completely devoid of meaning and content [3. p. 4]

The plot of the novel demonstrates, in essence, a new relationship between the author and the reader in a postmodern situation. Literature was over, everything that could be written had already been written - before the explosion. FedorKuzmich acts as the only modern author, who, in fact, performs the function of a scripter: he rewrites classical and any other texts without understanding their meaning at all, and then gives them to RabochayaIzba, entrusting his function to other scriptors, including and Benedict. But the consciousness of Benedict is not so much the consciousness of the script writer, but the consciousness of the reader, whose birth, according to R. Barth, is paid for by the death of the author [8. p. 36]. It is Benedict who tries, to the best of his ability, to comprehend what was created by the scriptor Fyodor Kuzmich and give it all his own meaning.

In fact, the position of postmodernist theorists is literally realized here: there is only a text that does not have a meaning; the meaning is given to him by the reader.

Three groups of characters can be distinguished in the novel, representing "readers" of different levels, with different "capacity of memory", different languages: die, "reborn" - they belong to the same time, but a different social group, and "darlings" - born after the Explosion. The language of the "darlings" prevails in the novel, primarily due to the fact that for the most part the text is an improperly direct speech of Benedict. Tolstaya noted that when creating their language, it was easy to borrow vocabulary, among the sources she names Dahl's dictionary, the speech of her nanny, from literature - the language of Andrei Platonov. "It was more difficult with syntax, with morphology - this is not quite a literary language, pre-Pushkin, partly pre-Petrine, littered with particles, old verb forms." This is a language, moreover, oral, not bookish, relatively speaking, of the "Russian Middle Ages" [7. p. 98]

The language of the "darlings" is not adapted to such a role, their memory does not have any depth at all. As already mentioned, they perceive the world according to postmodern ideas, and everything written is like a text in which the inscriptions on the pillar "Nikitsky Gates", "GlebKlava", "Vitya was here" and obscenities are equivalent. Whereas for the "Former" only the first part of the inscription is significant - it is "a historical milestone, here stood the Nikitsky Gate."

According to the very first remarks, it is determined what social niche the "reborns" occupied, if the "Former" ones are mainly associated with the Soviet intelligentsia, then the "reborns" are proletarians, "people from the people" who moved to live in the city and eventually made up the "urban lower classes" ", an environment where thieves' songs, urban "tearful" or "cruel" romances are popular. The language of the degenerates is rough, simplified and primitive, saturated with criminal jargon, thieves, vulgar vocabulary.

Only the "Former" have a rather complex language, they, unlike the "reborns" and "darlings", are capable of generating and transmitting information, of assimilating and transmitting culture, of reading, in the end. And the "ideal postmodern reader", which Benedict is in the novel, simply does not know the language that would allow him to master the received cultural heritage.

Thus, the subject of the image in the novel is the fate of the Russian literary tradition in the era that followed the cultural and literary postmodern explosion, and the fate of the language, its "mutation" - the main consequence of the explosion, according to Tolstoy herself. Turning to Victor Pelevin's story "The Hermit and the Six-Fingered", we will see a grotesque allegory for modern society. The main idea of the work was the confrontation on the principle of "man-crowd".

The main characters of the story are two broiler chickens named the Recluse and Shestipaliy, who are grown for slaughter at the Lunacharsky poultry plant. As it turns out from the story, the chicken community has a rather complex hierarchical structure depending on the proximity to the feeder.

The plot of the story begins with the expulsion of Six-fingered from society. Disconnected from society and the feeder, Sixfinger encounters The Recluse, a philosopher chicken and naturalist who wanders between different societies within the plant. Thanks to his extraordinary intellect, he was able to master the language of people on his own, learned to read time by the clock and realized that chickens hatch from eggs (although he himself did not see this).

Six-fingered becomes a student and associate of the Hermit. Together they travel from world to world, accumulating and summarizing knowledge and experience. The ultimate goal of the Recluse is to comprehend some mysterious phenomenon called "flight". The recluse believes that having mastered the flight, he will be able to break out of the limits of the combine's universe [4. p. 4]

It is no coincidence that until the end of the work the reader remains unaware that the story is about chickens. From the very beginning, the author separates the "society" and the main characters. The main task of this "society" is getting closer to the trough - in this way the author ironically over the desire for "acquisition" of a real society. The heroes are looking for a way out of the "worlds", realizing their impending death. Turning to the episode with the "throwing" of the heroes over the "wall of the world", we meet the "Old Mothers" "... no one, including the fat man, knew what it was, it was just such a tradition", they "shouted insulting words through tears to the Recluse and Six-fingered, mourning and cursing them at the same time. Cruel irony is seen in these seemingly minor images. If we recall mothers-mourners in the real life of ancient Rus', we see sincere human compassion, grief, but here the author shows that feelings are replaced by habit, because the line between mourning and cursing is so thin.

The reader may be surprised by the strange combination of heroes - the philosopher Hermit and the stupid Six-fingered. Why is it that a fool is able to get out of society and has the right to exist? Let us return, again, to the episode of exile: "The six-fingered one last time looked around at everything that was left below and noticed that someone from the distant crowd was waving goodbye to him, then he waved back ..." Having got out of his "world" and seeing how he irretrievably disappeared and died, Six-fingered cries, remembering the "man" below. The recluse calls it love. That's what makes a six-toed chick different from the rest. He has a heart. Perhaps the author personifies this with a strange vestige of the sixth finger, because this is not characteristic of the rest of society ("society").

The goal of the heroes - as mentioned above - is the "highest state" - flight. it is no coincidence that Sixfinger takes off first. Since morality and cordiality are more important and more important than calculation and cold reason (inherent in the Recluse).

Developing progressively, the literature of our time remains unchanged in its strict reproach to heartlessness, cynicism and indifference. Figuratively speaking, those who killed the heroine of MatryonaDvor defended criminals and bloodletters in The Sad Detective, and then formed a thoughtless society in The Hermit and Sixfinger. [5. p. 4]

I would like to summarize my analysis with the work of Tatyana NikitichnaTolstaya "Kys". The book was written for fourteen years, became the winner of many literary works. "Kys" is a post-apocalyptic dystopia. The novel takes place after a nuclear explosion, in a world of mutated plants, animals and people. In the masses, the old culture has died out, and only those who lived before the explosion (the so-called "former") keep it. The protagonist of the novel, Benedict, is the son of the "former" woman PolinaMikhailovna. After her death, another "former" - Nikita Ivanovich - takes in Benedict's upbringing. He is trying to accustom him to culture, but to no avail ... The image of Kysya - some kind of terrible creature - passes through the entire novel, periodically appearing in Benedict's imagination and thoughts. Kitty herself does not appear in the novel, probably being a figment of the imagination of the characters, the embodiment of fear of the unknown and incomprehensible, of the dark sides of her own soul. In the view of the heroes of the novel, Kys is invisible and lives in the dense northern forests: "She sits on dark

branches and screams so wildly and plaintively: kys! y-yy! And no one can see her. A man will go like this into the forest, and she will be around his neck from behind: hop! and the ridge with teeth: crunch! - and with a claw he will feel for the main vein and tear it, and all the mind will come out of a person.

Along with the physical mutation, there is a mutation of values, however, characteristic of people even before the explosion. People have one passion - the Mouse (a kind of monetary unit). The concept of "justice" is peculiar according to the principle - if someone steals from me, I will go and steal from the second, that from the third, the third look and steal from the first thief. so you look and "justice" will come out.

The protagonist of the novel, Benedict, is distinguished from other "darlings" by his passion not only for mice and "plaques" (a monetary unit), but also for books (they occupy a special place in the novel). It is important to note that Benedict's office is a copyist. The head of the city, Fyodor Kuzmich, keeps a huge library that existed even before the explosion and passes off the works of both the world's greatest classics and folklore as his own work. These books are handed over to scribes who transfer the contents to birch bark and sell them to people. An amazingly well-planned system that misleads people: books (genuine, printed) are presented as a source of radiation; there is a detachment of "orderlies" who take away the owners of books in an unknown direction - "to be treated." People are scared. The only ones who know that books are not dangerous are the "old" people who lived before the explosion. They know the true authors of literary works, but the "darlings", of course, do not believe them.

Benedict's mentor and, in fact, the main ideological character of the work, Nikita Ivanych is a "former" person, his goal is to educate Benedict. But these attempts are futile. Neither wood carving of Pushkin nor communication is beneficial to Benedict. Having married the daughter of the chief orderly, having gained access to books, Benya still does not understand their meaning, but reads out of interest. In the episodes of reading, there is a sharp, characteristic of Tatyana Tolstaya, irony: "... there is a magazine Potatoes and Vegetables, with pictures. And there is "Behind the wheel". And there are Siberian Lights. And there is "Syntax", the word is kind of obscene, but what does it mean, do not understand. Must be motherly. Benedict flipped through: exactly, swear words there. Postponed: interesting. Read at night. In his thirst for meaningless reading, the hero commits a crime. The scene of his killing the man, the owner of the book, is written very briefly, fluently. The author shows the ordinary attitude towards murder, indifference to human life, and, even if Benedict's torment after the crime is described, he, carrying out a coup d'état with his son-in-law, without hesitation kills the guards, and then the "greatest murza" (head of the city), pursuing the "good The goal is to save the books. As for the coup, KudayarKudeyarych, who came to power, becomes a new tyrant, all his transformations are the renaming of FedorKuzmichsk to KudayarKudeyarychsk and the ban on gathering more than three. All this miserable revolution leads to a new explosion and the complete destruction of the city ...

A novel is written in a sharp, sarcastic language, the purpose of which is to show the plight of a soulless society, to depict a human mutation, but not physical deformity, but spiritual and spiritual wretchedness. The attitude of people towards each other, their indifference to someone else's death and fear of their own is duplicity that has become the norm. The protagonist of the novel thinks about people, about strangers and loved ones, about those who are sorry and who are not sorry. In one of the episodes, he reflects on a neighbor:

"A neighbor is not a simple matter, it is not just anyone, not a passer-by, not a passer-by. A neighbor is given to a person to make his heart heavy, to stir up his mind, to inflame his temper. From him, from a neighbor, it seems that something is coming, worry heavy or anxiety. Sometimes a thought will enter: why is he, a neighbor, like this, and not another? What is he? .. You look at him: here he went out onto the porch. Yawns. Looks into the sky. Spat. Looks up to

the sky again. And you think: what is he looking at? What didn't he see? It's worth it, but what it's worth - he doesn't know. Shout: - Hey! - What? .. - Nothing! That's what. He combed, chevokalka ... Why combed something? .. - And what do you want? - But nothing! - Well, shut up! Well, you'll fight another time, when you die, otherwise you'll just break your arms and legs, you'll gouge out your eye there, something else. Neighbor because.

Described with humor, in an amusing, time-stylized language, the attitude towards people is actually the author's cry about rudeness that has become the norm. Theft, drunkenness, debauchery - all this is normal for the society described in the novel. And as a result - Kys - the embodiment of human fears, perhaps not existing at all. But this same Kitty is a warning, a warning from the author that, apart from fear and chaos, nothing can give rise to immorality, cynicism and indifference. Whether there was an explosion or not, it doesn't matter. Reading the novel, you understand that we now see almost all aspects of a fictional society around us.

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