



THE CULTURE OF THE WEST IN THE 20TH

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ABSTRACT: - The culture of the West in the 20th century has gone through two main stages. The first corresponds to late imperialism, the era of mass assembly line production and totalitarian consciousness. This is the first half of the century, the years 1918-1945, the time when, as a result of the scientific and technological revolution, new forms of culture arose - radio and cinema, which supplanted literature in the minds of people.

KEYWORDS: Literature, modernism, form, consciousness, system.

INTRODUCTION

The second stage is the period after 1945, when it becomes obvious that bourgeois society, despite the gloomy forecasts of Marx and Nietzsche, is viable, and deep internal restructuring is taking place in it: modern systems of radical democracy are emerging, a "consumer society" is taking shape, processes of globalization of the world are underway. economy. The information revolution of the end of the 20th century generally changes the attitude of a person to the printed word, books are increasingly read from display screens, and in the developed Western countries the role of literature in the public consciousness is

steadily declining with ever-increasing competition from cinema and rock music.

Literary development in the twentieth century is accelerating, the universally recognized unit of articulation of the literary process is no longer a period of time a century long, as it used to be, but a decade. Each decade of the 20th century gave rise to new trends in literature, loud manifestos were created, new schools were proclaimed. Beneath this turbulent surface, behind the very intensity of the search, it is not always easy to discern the inner meaning and patterns of changing literary trends.

Realism in the 20th century is represented by many names of once famous writers, but

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today it is clear that, whatever their lifetime popularity, the realistic novel in the 20th century existed mainly due to inertia. Realism as a striving for a scientific analysis of the world and man comes from confidence in the cognizability of the world, from an optimistic conviction that the word is an ideal and objective tool for cognizing reality, that the social vices revealed in the word are subject to correction. We have seen that all these postulates of realism are already called into question by Conrad. The catastrophic reality of the 20th century finally undermined the ideological basis of realism - historical optimism and faith in progress, therefore, although the forms of realistic narration were preserved, they were perceived by the aesthetically developed reader as a relic of the past.

Only when realist writers came into contact with other trends did their works become genuine events.

Forms of realistic narration have found application in a new phenomenon in the literature of the twentieth century - in mass literature. This is literature created for the mass reader according to clear recipes, unpretentious in the artistic sense, ideologically aimed at maintaining the existing world order. This is a literary product, subject to all the laws of the market, focused on different categories of consumers. Thus, different series of romance novels may be aimed at young girls, young career women, older women, and so on. The genres of popular literature - detective, sentimental novel, thriller, fantasy, science fiction - quantitatively predominate in the literature of the twentieth century, but due to their frankly commercial nature, entertainment function and a high degree of predictability, "formula", they fall into the field of view of critics rather as phenomena from the field of sociology of literature. No one seriously talks about the

artistry of these one-day works, reading them does not require the work of the mind and heart, but gives rest after a monotonous working day, becomes a form of relaxation. All genres of conformist popular literature skim the surface of modern life, the characters in them are created according to long-tested formulas, the emphasized reliability of details, an indispensable moral lesson, and much more are borrowed from a realistic novel. However, the very specific weight of mass literature has turned into a factor that has a reverse effect on "high" literature. Serious writers of the 20th century increasingly used in their works the techniques of plot construction and stylistic clichés of popular literature, of course, completely rethinking them in line with their own goals. One way or another, mass literature plays an ever-increasing role in the culture of the twentieth century.

The central, most fruitful trends in the literature of the 20th century were modernism, which flourished in the first half of the century, and postmodernism that replaced it after 1945. We will consider them in more detail.

Modernism in literature originates on the eve of the First World War and reaches its peak in the twenties simultaneously in all countries of Western Europe and in America. Modernism is an international phenomenon, consisting of different schools (Imagism, Dadaism, Expressionism, Constructivism, Surrealism, etc.). This is a revolution in literature, the participants of which announced a break not only with the tradition of realistic plausibility, but also with the Western cultural and literary tradition in general. Any previous trend in literature defined itself through its relation to the classical tradition: one could directly proclaim antiquity as a model of artistic creativity, like the classicists, or prefer the Middle Ages to antiquity, like romantics, but all cultural epochs before modernism are

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called today more and more often "classical", because developed in line with the classical heritage of European thought. Modernism is the first cultural and literary epoch that did away with this heritage and provided new answers to "eternal" questions. As the English poet S. Spender wrote in 1930: "It seems to me that modernists are consciously striving to create a completely new literature. This is a consequence of their feeling that our era is in many respects unprecedented and stands outside any conventions of past art and literature" . The generation of the first modernists keenly felt the exhaustion of the forms of realistic narrative, their aesthetic fatigue. For modernists, the concept of "realism" meant the absence of an effort to independently comprehend the world, the mechanistic nature of creativity, superficiality, the boredom of vague descriptions - an interest in a button on a character's coat, and not in his state of mind. Modernists above all put the value of an individual artistic vision of the world; the artistic worlds they create are uniquely dissimilar to each other, each one bears the stamp of a bright creative individuality.

It fell to them to live in a period when the values of traditional humanistic culture collapsed - "freedom" meant very different things in Western democracies and in totalitarian states; the bloody massacre of the First World War, in which weapons of mass destruction were used for the first time, showed the true price of human life for the modern world; the humanistic ban on pain, on physical and spiritual violence was replaced by the practice of mass executions and concentration camps. Modernism is the art of a dehumanized era (the term of the Spanish philosopher José Ortega y Gasset); the attitude to humanistic values in modernism is ambiguous, but the world of modernists appears in a hard, cold light. Using the

metaphor of J. Conrad, one can say that the hero of the modernist work seemed to stop for the night in an uncomfortable hotel at the end of the world, with very suspicious owners, in a shabby room, lit by the pitiless light of a lamp without a lampshade.

Modernists conceive of human existence as a brief, fragile moment; the subject may or may not be aware of the tragedy, the frailty of our absurd world, and the artist's job is to show the horror, grandeur and beauty that are contained in spite of everything in the moments of earthly existence. Social problems, which played such an important role in the realism of the 19th century, are given indirectly in modernism, as an inseparable part of a holistic portrait of the individual. The main sphere of interest of modernists is the image of the relationship between the conscious and the unconscious in a person, the mechanisms of his perceptions, and the whimsical work of memory. The modernist hero is taken, as a rule, in the whole integrity of his experiences, his subjective being, although the very scale of his life can be small, insignificant. In modernism, the main line of development of the literature of the New Age continues to the constant decline in the social status of the hero; the modernist hero is a "everyman," any and every person. Modernists have learned to describe such mental states of a person that literature had not noticed before, and they did it with such persuasiveness that it seemed to bourgeois critics an insult to morality and a profanation of the art of the word. Not only the content - the big role of intimate and sexual issues, the relativity of moral assessments, the emphasized apoliticality - but first of all, the unusual forms of modernist narrative caused a particularly sharp rejection. Today, when most of the masterpieces of modernist literature have entered school and university curricula, it is difficult for us to feel the rebellious, anti-

bourgeois character of early modernism, the sharpness of the accusations and challenges thrown by it.

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