

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Concepts of Time and Space in The Fantasy Prose of Russian And Uzbek Writers of the 20th–21st Centuries

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VOLUME: Vol.06 Issue02 2026

PAGE: 54-56

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Abstract

The present article is devoted to an examination of the artistic concepts of time and space as manifest in the fantasy prose of Russian and Uzbek writers of the 20th and 21st centuries. The focus of this study is twofold: firstly, the ways in which the time-space continuum is represented, and secondly, the influence of national mentality, philosophical and cultural traditions on the formation of literary chronotope [1]. The article elucidates how science fiction literature functions as a medium for philosophical reflection on such themes as existence, the historical process, and the technological and spiritual future of humanity [2, 3]. A comparative approach facilitates the identification of both general universal trends in the development of the genre and unique features determined by national literary traditions [4,5].

KEY WORDS

Fantasy, chronotope, time, space, Russian literature, Uzbek literature, alternative reality, cultural code, philosophy, science fiction.

INTRODUCTION

The 20th and 21st centuries have been prolific in producing fantastic prose, which can be considered one of the most significant trends in contemporary literature. This genre has seen a flourishing of artistic and philosophical exploration of the fundamental categories of existence: time and space [1]. The appeal of science fiction as a distinct mode of artistic thinking stems from its capacity to construct alternative realities that transcend the limits of empirical experience and linear historical time. In this context, the categories of time and space are elevated to the status of structural elements of the narrative, as well as being recognised as pivotal components in the formation of meaning within the artistic realm [3,5].

The issue of chronotope is of particular pertinence within the domain of literature concerning diverse cultural, historical and philosophical traditions. The artistic interpretation of time and space in Russian and Uzbek science fiction prose has been

determined by the different socio-cultural conditions in which these literary systems were formed [1]. Conversely, the utilisation of the genre of science fiction facilitates the identification of both the universal patterns of the development of artistic consciousness and the nationally determined features of world perception reflected in the literary text [6,7].

This article aims to examine artistic concepts of time and space in the fantasy prose of 20th- and 21st-century Russian and Uzbek writers [1]. To this end, the following tasks will be undertaken: an analysis of the temporal and spatial organisation of fantasy texts; an identification of the philosophical and cultural foundations of the chronotope; and a comparison of Russian and Uzbek literary traditions in the context of the development of the fantasy genre [4,5].

METHODS

The research material comprised works of fantasy fiction by Russian and Uzbek writers of the 20th and 21st centuries. The Russian literary corpus is represented by works by I. Efremov, A. and B. Strugatsky, and S. Lukyanenko [8,9,10], while the Uzbek corpus is represented by texts by Tohir Malik and Hoziakbar Shaykhov [6,7]. The selection of artistic material is based on the significance of these authors for the development of national traditions of science fiction literature, as well as the pronounced issues of artistic modelling of time and space in their works.

The theoretical and methodological basis of the study is the concept of chronotope developed by M.M. Bakhtin, which allows analysis of the interrelation of temporal and spatial characteristics of a literary text. The work also employs the principles of the philosophy of time as presented in the works of A. Bergson and M. Heidegger, as well as research in the field of cultural memory and the mythopoetics of space developed by M. Eliade and Yu. M. Lotman.

The present study employs a range of analytical methods, including comparative analysis, cultural-historical analysis, and intertextual analysis. The employment of a comparative approach facilitates the identification of both common and nationally specific features of artistic concepts of time and space in Russian and Uzbek fantasy prose. The cultural-historical method is utilised to analyse literary texts within the context of philosophical and cultural traditions, while intertextual analysis is employed to discern mythological, philosophical and symbolic meanings [1,2].

The present study adopts a qualitative approach with the objective of conducting a comprehensive analysis of the structural, semantic and conceptual dimensions that underpin the temporal and spatial organisation of fantasy texts. This study pays particular attention to models of linear, cyclical and alternative time, as well as the functions of artistic space as a physical, social and metaphysical category [1,2]. This comprehensive approach provides a solid foundation for the analysis of the subject matter.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of fantasy prose by Russian and Uzbek writers of the 20th and 21st centuries has demonstrated that artistic concepts of time and space fulfil not an auxiliary function, but rather one that is meaning-forming and philosophical in nature. In the context of science fiction literature, the concept of chronotope serves a pivotal role in the modelling of

alternative realities, thereby offering a reflection of the author's comprehension of historical processes, human existence, and the potential for civilisation's advancement [4,5].

The prevailing temporal models in Russian science fiction literature are characterised by their complexity and non-linearity, with rational organisation of space being based on a scientific worldview. In the literary works of I. Efremov, time is depicted as an evolutionary and progressive process, which is associated with the concept of progress and the moral improvement of humanity [8]. The literary works of A. and B. Strugatsky are distinguished by the relativity and fragmentary nature of time, as well as spatial paradoxes that underscore the crisis of rational thinking and existential uncertainty [9]. In the oeuvre of S. Lukyanenko, the concept of chronotope undergoes a transformation through the introduction of parallel worlds, virtual spaces, and multiverses. This reflects a postmodern perception of reality and multiple identities [10].

Conversely, Uzbek fantasy prose demonstrates a stronger inclination towards mythological consciousness, historical memory, and spiritual and philosophical traditions. An analysis of the works of Tohir Malik and Hoziakbar Shaykhov demonstrates that time is frequently perceived as cyclical and sacred, thereby establishing a connection between the present and the archaic and historical layers of culture [6,7]. It is therefore evident that space acquires a symbolic character and functions as a spiritual or moral field within which the characters' internal development takes place.

A comparative analysis was conducted, which revealed both differences and common trends in the artistic interpretation of time and space. In both literary traditions, the fantastic chronotope is employed as a medium for philosophical reflection, enabling authors to pose universal questions concerning the meaning of existence, the relationship between technological progress and spiritual values, and the place of humans in a historical and cosmic context [1,2,3]. The non-linearity of time and the multidimensionality of space become means of rethinking traditional ideas about reality [5].

The findings substantiate the notion that the conceptualisation of artistic notions of time and space in fantasy prose is contingent on the interplay of genre conventions and national-cultural factors [8,6]. Chronotope in Russian and Uzbek science fiction functions as a dynamic structure that reflects both the specifics of the national worldview and universal philosophical problems, thus allowing us to consider science

fiction as an important space for intercultural dialogue [3,4].

CONCLUSION

The study demonstrates that the categories of time and space in the fantasy prose of Russian and Uzbek writers of the 20th and 21st centuries function not only as elements of the artistic organisation of the text, but also as significant means of philosophical understanding of reality [1,2]. The fantastic chronotope functions as a universal tool for modelling alternative forms of existence, through which authors express their attitude to the historical process, spiritual values and prospects for the development of humanity [3,4].

A comparative analysis has demonstrated that Russian fantastic literature is characterised by rationally organised and frequently non-linear models of time and space, oriented towards the concepts of scientific progress, social experimentation and the future development of civilization [8,9]. Uzbek science fiction prose demonstrates a strong connection with mythological thinking, a sacred and cyclical perception of time, as well as historical and cultural memory and spiritual and philosophical traditions [6,7]. These differences are indicative of the idiosyncrasies inherent in the national mentality and cultural code of each literary tradition.

Concurrently, the identified parallels signify the presence of shared motifs in the evolution of the fantasy genre. In both literary systems, chronotope is employed as a medium for posing universal existential questions related to the nature of human existence, the relationship between technological and spiritual principles, and the search for meaning in a changing reality [1,5]. This serves to confirm the transnational nature of fantasy as a form of artistic and philosophical dialogue.

Consequently, the analysis of the concepts of time and space in the fantasy prose of Russian and Uzbek writers contributes to an expanded understanding of the genre's potential and underscores its significance as a medium for intercultural interaction. Prospects for further research are linked to the expansion of the corpus of analysed texts, the involvement of other national literatures, and an in-depth study of the transformation of the fantastic chronotope in the context of globalisation and digital culture [4,2].

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