

TRANSFORMATION OF THE FANTASY GENRE IN JOE ABERCROMBIE'S NOVELS

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Annotation. The article examines the main elements of fantasy genre and its modern transformations, compares classical fantasy books with the so-called dark fantasy, analyses the works of the British writer Joe Abercrombie.

Keywords: fantasy; dark fantasy; Joe Abercrombie; hero.

Science fiction and fantasy are becoming more and more popular nowadays. Although they are considered to be a light read, they offer absorbing stories about serious social issues. The changes in the genre can tell us a lot about the processes in our society.

Recently, it has been noticed that authors are transforming the genre of science fiction and fantasy. There are more and more books in the dark fantasy genre.

What is this genre and what is it about? Dark fantasy is a subgenre of fantasy. While fantasy features magical and supernatural elements that do not exist in the real world, dark fantasy includes horror and gothic elements.

Dark fantasy appeared in the West and focuses mostly on western culture and ideals. As a rule, the action takes place in a war-torn world where there is no place for hope and goodness. In general, the conflict in fantasy novels is good versus evil. However, we do not see any positive characters in dark fantasy books at all. Most main characters have only negative traits. There is no black, no white, only shades of grey and black.

Why are people so interested in this sub-genre of fantasy? The answer is obvious. People's worldview is reflected in this type of literature. Reading dark fantasy can help readers make sense of the present-day world. Sometimes you feel despair, people's suffering described in the dark fantasy novel makes you realize that nothing depends on you. When reading such books, we analyze the behavior of the main characters under the given conditions, and try to predict our way of dealing with similar problems in real life. After all, it is scientifically proven that our brain does not distinguish between what you read and what actually happens. Research shows that all fiction can generate critical thinking.

An example of such books is Joe Abercrombie's «Earth Circle» series. The first book of the «Earth Circle» series, «The Blade itself», tells us from the very beginning that you shouldn't expect any positive heroes here, and if that happens, they are usually destined to a sad fate. It's like our real life, isn't it?

The most memorable character is probably Zand Dan Glokta. His past and present are connected with torture and cruelty. Throughout the book he tortures people and gets the truth out of them. In this cruel world, he has no choice but has to play by its rules. This character is the most typical one of the dark fantasy genre. Throughout the book he asks himself, «Why am I doing this?» So, for example, in the chapter «Questions» Glokta tortures Reus, one of the silk merchant's guild. Reus used to be a friend of Glokta's. It had been before the war that changed Glokta's life and the way people treated him.

Through various means Glokta forces Reus to confess to evading royal taxes. Also, at the request of the archdelegate Sulte, Reus is forced to put the name of the mint master in the text of the confession.

At the end of the chapter Glokta sums up, «I win again. Does my leg hurt any less? Do I have my teeth back? Has it helped me to destroy this man, who I once called a friend? Then why do I do this?» [1, P. 34]. Despite all this, Glokta still leaves room for hope.

In the chapter «Morning Ritual» Glokta has a happy dream, but when he wakes up, he realizes that he is still the same useless cripple. He calls for Barnam, his servant, to help him out of bed and wash. «You have to learn to love the small things in life, like a hot bath. You have to love the small things, when you've nothing else» [1, P. 87].

It's impossible to live without believing in something and without hope. People are such creatures who always unconsciously look for a way out and hope for the best.

We have already mentioned that Glokta is a typical dark fantasy character. Now we're going to expand on that a little bit.

We can say conventionally that Glokta has two sides. The first one, which leads the way, is the desire to survive by any available means, despite all the problems of his life. Although in some chapters he explicitly states that he is not afraid of anything, I still tend to think that this is not entirely true. We are all afraid, afraid of death, afraid of pain. Even if we don't admit it. It is human nature.

The other side constantly asks him, «Why are you doing this? Why are you torturing this person? Why are you serving someone? For what? Is that really what you want?».

It is the presence of two opposing sides, where the desire to go on living by any available means wins out, that is the hallmark of dark fantasy. In addition, darkness in dark fantasy novels shows not the white and black sides of conflict, but all black. As an epigraph to one of the chapters, the author quotes Joseph Brodsky as saying «Life – the way it really is – is a battle not between good and bad, but between bad and worse».

Also, the primary setting for dark fantasy works, like Joe Abercrombie's, is the Middle Ages or something similar to it. This is so because it is the period in which it is the easiest to describe the suffering and despair of people whose lives are worthless in such a cruel world.

I believe that people need this kind of literature. People learn how to behave in similar circumstances. The more they look at the suffering of others, the more they begin to appreciate their lives and their boring moments. In fact, they are not boring. We just perceive them that way. Our life is amazing in itself. During our life, we face a countless number of different situations. While trying to explain every aspect of our lives, we have created a lot of theories. Isn't that amazing in itself? I think people need art, music and books, including dark fantasy literature, as through fictional worlds books show the reality of our own ones.

References

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СОПОСТАВИТЕЛЬНЫЙ АНАЛИЗ ПЕРЕВОДА СКАЗКИ А. МИЛНА «ВИННИ-ПУХ»

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Аннотация. В статье раскрывается проблема перевода текста сказки англоговорящего писателя на русский язык. Автор приводит примеры перевода тех или иных слов и предложений разных переводчиков. Актуальность данной статьи определяется необходимостью изучения проблем перевода художественного текста в жанре английской авторской сказки и разнообразных подходов к его восприятию.

Ключевые слова: сказка; язык; текст; специфика; перевод.

Сказка – это жанр устного или письменного творчества. У истоков данного жанра лежат фольклорные (народные) сказки, которые передавались из уст в уста. Позднее появился такой жанр как литературная сказка. Отличительными особенностями являлось то, что автором данного произведения выступал определённый писатель, раскрытие автором нравственных, социальных, эстетических проблем истории и современности, а также форма существования текста была письменная.