

NININS 2020**International Scientific Forum «National Interest, National Identity and National Security»****HUXLEY' S DYSTOPIA IN THE ASPECT OF THE GENRE
CREATIVE EVOLUTION**

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Abstract

The genre of anti-utopia acquires new significance nowadays, as it helps to reveal essential peculiarities of contemporary reality due to its specific intrinsic features. The present research analyzes the specificity of Huxley's novel *Brave New World* in the context of the creative evolution of the dystopic literary genre. Investigating the fledging period of the named genre the authors expose the reasons for which novelists resorted to anti-utopia at the beginning of the XX century and defined the originality of the leading stylistic means, employed by the writers-anti-utopist. The authors come to the determination that the novel is an idiosyncratic literary work, where dystopic features are intertwining with the utopic genre markers: distrust in the social and moral progress of humanity, the practice of social consciousness manipulation, robotics and dehumanization of a person in a standardized society. Through wit and pessimistic satire, the author hyperbolizes features of contemporary reality. The paper also observes the specifics of the anti-utopic genre development of Huxley's novelism in connection with the writer's outlook in his early writing period, to which *Brave New World* refers. In the course of the research, there was suggested a conclusion that Huxley's vision of futuristic society is caused by his agnostic-pessimistic apprehension of the reality surrounding him. The phenomena he cogitated and forewarned of their consequences occur in a tacit or overt manifestation nowadays.

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1. Introduction

Images of the future always excited the imagination of all the generations. Great masters of the word from More to Golding invented fantastic and picturesque worlds. In his dystopic novel, *Brave New World* Huxley presented a genetically programmable society, which became the object of the present research.

Dystopian novels appeared in Russian and foreign literature just at the beginning of the XX century. This period was marked with various social events having provoked crucial political changes. Many contemporary thinkers, cultural luminaries turned their minds to the spiritual order of a personality. They endeavoured to spare people from the illusion of immediate vicinity of earthly paradise, bring people to the awareness of practical and spiritual experience diversity. Huxley's *Brave New World*, having originated in 1932, registered 'stemming comedown'. The time of the world's economic crisis dispelled the idea of the possibility of achieving overall public happiness and harmony.

The rate of the price paid for social experimenting became apparent many decades later. So, the problem of the ethical nature of social reformation and the moral expenses it caused turns out to state the central theme in the literary activity of outstanding masters, anti-utopists among them. Huxley forewarns of the necessity of discovering alternative life patterns with moral virtues in their incontrovertible norms. The fact of approbation of new forms of social existence without reconciliation of morality in the XXI century makes the analysis of Huxley's creativity rational.

2. Problem Statement

Statement the problem of the present research relates to discerning the investigation of Huxley's creative works in retrospect.

In the Western critical literature practice, a great many literators turn to Huxley's novels studying the utopic aspects and their traditional motives. Morton (1987) observed utopic and anti-utopic strategies in Huxley's books;

Meckier (1969) focused on his acute and wit satire; Holmes (1970) spotted a social warning of the novel.

Russian literature studies in the middle of XX considered *Brave New World* to be either a sample of anti-bourgeois satire (Zhantieva, 1972) or a totalitarian model of a new society, created employing lingua-stylistic devices (Shishkin, 1990). Modern literary critic Golovacheva (2008) considered the discussed literary work to be an anti-American novel. Some Russian scholars scrutinizing the author's fiction world provided a thorough comparison of Huxley's *Brave New World* with Zamyatin's *We* (Palievsky, 2004) whereas, Shestakov (2012) drew typological parallels of Russian and English dystopian traditions.

There is a tough basis to think over the deep philosophic meaning of the dystopian novel in its reference to foreseeing the events of XX within the terms of creative utopian writing tradition. We proceed with the specificity of genre development in Huxley's novel in the context of the author's outlook during his early creative period to which *Brave New World* refers. This approach determines the novelty of the undertaken research.

3. Research Questions

As it was mentioned above, the particularity of Huxley's depicting the dystopian world is determined by his agnostic-pessimistic perception of his reality. To enucleate the originality of characteristic features of Huxley's dystopia, we deliberately compared the precursor novels of the genre. We hypothesize that the author combines utopian and dystopian genre features to present his dream of an ideal society model (World State) of the future, which is tightly connected with his contemporary world-view. Huxley's political and social conception accepts the virtual model of the world order. Nevertheless, he denies the possibility of its extrapolation onto the future society, for its abhorring nature, belying individual liberty. Dystopian semantic space presupposes some dilemma in world-view: on the one hand, predetermined by technical progress benevolent intentions, on the other hand, social discord and illusory existence. A conceptual and verbal analysis of the artistic embodiment of the author's philosophic views in *Brave New World* may help to establish the nature and means of predicting the defeat of hopes or even the whole world. This approach brings to the limelight a host of human issues of civilization, both global (war, peace, independence, freedom) and individual ones (love, happiness, will, pleasures). Correlating form and sense Huxley warns us about the great dangers of seductive desire to build a society of overall welfare and illusions of hyper-intelligent beings. Despite a long time passed after the novel had been published, we believe that most of the expressed ideas and fiction images have projections in the up-to-date reality.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the undertaken investigation is to state the specific features of Huxley's dystopian novel *Brave New World*, to define its place within the process of genre development and to prove the timeliness of his ideas to the modern world.

In order to achieve the goal, we need to complete the following tasks:

1. to state the notion of the terms 'utopia' and 'dystopia', their origin, differences, and similarity;
2. to observe the reasons by which writers of XX turned to the dystopian genre and dominative literary, artistic means they employed;
3. to define particularities of the author's representation of dystopian principles by analyzing *Brave New World*;
4. to determine the interpretation of specific dystopian features through the author's mentality.

As it was stated earlier, the material of the research was the authentic text of Huxley's *Brave New World* (21 excerpts for detailed linguistic analysis); utopic and dystopic literary works of the XVI – XX centuries. Alongside the historical perspective observation of the correspondence and developmental signposts of the utopian/dystopian literary genres, the paper suggests a componential text analysis.

5. Research Methods

The characterization of specificity of genre development and up-to-date perception of utopic ideas was based on the methodology of functional and historical approach to literature works analyses.

At the first stage of the research, we clarified the concepts of utopia and dystopia concerning their origin, similarity, and differences. According to Chalikova (1991) 'utopia' is a detailed and consistent description of imaginary, though locally determined in time and place, the society built up and organized based on alternative social and historical hypothesis both on the institutional and individual levels, which is much more perfect than the society the author lives in. This definition underlines that the starting point of any utopic novel becomes dissatisfaction with the existing reality and acquiring new aspirations, which straightly points onto the priority of morality and social structuring takes the second position only.

Everyday routine engulfs an individual with social evil looming over. This merciless truth provides building blocks for construing an ideal, which bears "a back projection of one historical epoch to another, i.e., a projection where all minuses are eliminated and pluses are enhanced" (Batalov, 1989, p. 98).

Ancient Greeks authors Euhemerus and Iambulus are considered to be the pioneers of the genre, having depicted an ideal state on an island (Winston, 1976). The great sophist Plato having suggested his vision of society arrangement inspired an Italian monk Campanella on writing his utopic tractate *The City of the Sun*. However, destiny and further development of the utopic genre were designated by the literary and philosophic activity of More, a famous English humanist of the XVI century.

The Renaissance authors extended the boundaries of utopian principles combining their ideas of "the best state order" with adventures and travel descriptions in their plots: Bacon's *New Atlantis*, Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, Henry Fielding's *A Journey from this World to the Next*, Butler's *Erewhon: or, Over the Range*. Sventokhovskiy (2014) remarks that "utopic novels distributed unevenly on epochs and nationalities. The bulk of the utopian works belong to French literature..." (p. 22) and the Slavonic utopian literature tradition stayed in the bud till the XX century, when dystopian Zamiatin's *We* and Platonov's *Chevengur* appeared.

The high-speed technical progress and crucial social-political events of the XX century (appalling wars, totalitarian regimes) discredited utopic ideals and transformed into a parodied utopic presentation, that is anti-utopic.

Now let us consider the term anti-utopia, which exposes its negative nature through the Greek prefix. Despite existing various synonymic terms (negative utopia, no-utopia, dystopia, kakotopia), the essence of definitions stays the same. According to Chalikova's (1991) definition, anti-utopia is "an image-model of a nonsensical mechanistic existence in perfectly organized dehumanized communities". She considers Orwell's *1984*, Golding's *Lord of the Flies* present "the society/community that overcame the utopic stage" to turn into the world deprived of dreams and memories" (p. 14). The researcher also draws a borderline between dystopia and kakotopia, saying that the former is characterized by philosophic and psychological aspects, whereas the latter includes the situations of disasters or catastrophic events, just like in Merle's *Malevil* or Tolstaya's *Kys*.

The genre of anti-utopia relates to historical reality as no other does. Dystopian writers choose the most deleterious social phenomena like fascism, totalitarianism, dictatorship, and others of the kind. Dystopias protest against violence, social absurdity, individual rightlessness. Negative features of the existing society are imparted to an imaginary one. Astute observation enabled writers and philosophers to depict a “perfect” state with its totalitarian and technocratic appearance and individual obliteration. A great Russian thinker Berdiaev anticipated the danger of social reforms and scientific experiments, which may radically change human morals. He wrote: “Utopias seem to be much more achievable than we formerly believed them to be. Now we find ourselves presented with another alarming question: how do we prevent utopias from coming into existence? ...Utopias are possible. Life tends towards the formation of utopias. Perhaps a new century will begin, a century in which intellectuals and the privileged will dream of ways to eliminate utopias and return to a non-utopic society less “perfect” and freer” (Berdyaev, 2002). It was this thought that became the epigraph to Huxley’s *Brave New World*.

In Berdiaev’s words, we can also detect another idea: utopia gave birth to anti-utopia, having shared a lot of basic features. As a result of the historical perspective analysis, we can state the tight connection between the two genres on the points of outlook and ideology. Utopian ideas result out of discontent with surrounding reality and provide grounds of creating a new alternative society model with different rules and laws. Dystopia appeared to shatter illusions of overall welfare.

One of the main means of transformation is satire in its stylistic manifestation. We could trace some dystopian elements expressed through satire even in Aristophanes’s comedies (as the satire on Plato’s utopian state). Satirical representations of Swift, Butler, Saltykov-Schedrin, Chesterton became prerequisites of dystopia. The core target of satire is a condemnation of vices, abuse, follies, that is constructive criticism of things people dislike or even abhor. Here, the purpose of satire and dystopia fully coincide. The brightest example of satire and dystopia unity in depicting the reality and reflection of political views opposition is the beginning of XX, with the October Revolution and the uprising of a new socialist state and development of communist ideas. Liberal-bourgeois mentality considered socialist ideas as distorted future perspectives, as in Orwell’s *Animal Farm*. Essays or Well’s *Men Like Gods*.

The second stage of the undertaken analysis focused on the exposure of genre features of Huxley’s *Brave New World*. Defining literature devices inside any genre is thought to be one of the most challenging tasks in fiction studies. Proceeding the analyses of the kind, first of all, we need to give attention to the identification of satire and grotesque. Utopian tradition is inclined to employing of such satirical devices as irony, sarcasm, grotesque description, hyperbole. The latest was widely used by Huxley in his dystopian novel to describe “brave, new world” and ways of “reaching harmony” of a man and a community. He variously describes the “conditioning” of an individual brain, enforcing hatred to flowers, books, arts utilizing electroshock, dangerous substances, alcohol, and even oxygen deprivation. The aim is to subdue intellectual and emotional potential to provide the community with obedient work-power. Genre peculiarities of the novel are closely connected with its mainstream: the correlation of scientific and human interaction laws, the danger of revolutionary social projects on humanity and reality transfiguration, the impossibility of ultimate happiness. We consider *Brave New World* to be a symbiosis of utopia and dystopia. The tragedy of the main character John, the Savage, who got out of Reservation into a civilized world to realize unacceptability of its morals, presupposes anti-utopic narration, as the

dream starting to realize suddenly reveals a host of side effects and leads to suicide. The life in community (existence in “civilization”), in a happy, equitable society of overall welfare determines the utopic keynote.

In his novel, Huxley accumulates his observations of contemporary reality that alarmed him, carrying stylistic devices used to absurdity. His main message renders a pessimistic idea that technical and scientific progress may bring forth a totalitarian society, where an individual is subdued to meet the required standard. Setting inner freedom limits, deprivation of the right to critical perception, and comprehension of the environment is inherent to any other dystopian world. The state motto (“the planetary motto”) of the brave, new world is “Community, Identity, Stability.” (Huxley, par. 1, 2004). So, people’s mentality and emotions are put into the frames, trespassing of which equals to committing a crime. The new community of Ford (the name of a famous car brand symbolizes the era of technological progress) denied and eliminated ethical and moral principles to be happy. The author poses a core question of the utopian idea: ‘Can a person be forcedly happy?’ Here, comes the next peculiarity of the dystopia. Huxley noticed a very significant social characteristic feature, that is standardization or unification of individuals. Huxley presented us with a hierarchically stratified community, where cloned people are sorted according to predetermined castes from Alphas (a ruling class) to Epsilons (menial labourers) who differ by their mental abilities and physical appearance. “But in Epsilons,” said Mr. Foster very justly, “We don’t need human intelligence. Didn’t need and didn’t get it.” (Huxley, par. 2, 2004). These words sound cynic, sarcastic, and appalling.

The lower castes have no any chance to master their intellect as all the articles moulding a personality are prohibited – no science and thought freedom, no arts and literary works, no religion and emotional closeness to others, there is nothing but sex. Talking on the point of past civilization, one of the main characters remarks anxiously: “There were those strange rumours of old forbidden books hidden in a safe in the Controller’s study. Bibles, poetry–Ford knew what.” (Huxley, 2004, p. 37). The most well-known books of all times Bible and The Complete Works of William Shakespeare, codes of moral “truths”, which became symbols of human morals and relationship, are buried in oblivion. For example, The Controller says instructively: “Because it’s old; that’s the chief reason. We haven’t any use for old things here.” ... “Particularly when they’re beautiful. Beauty’s attractive, and we don’t want people to be attracted by old things. We want them to like the new ones.” (Huxley, 2004, p. 243). Literature and Arts were degraded to synthetic music and “feelytone films – visibly, audibly and tactually” presented. Having brought the Savage into the movies, Lenina instructs him to “take hold of those metal knobs on the arms of your chair. Otherwise, you won’t get any of the feely effects.” (Huxley, 2004, p. 183).

The author suggests, that technological progress relegates spiritual values to primary biological instincts.

The same is going on with the science. One of the main characters Mustapha Mond compares science with cooking: “all our science is just a cookery book, with an orthodox theory of cooking that nobody’s allowed to question, and a list of recipes that mustn’t be added to except by special permission from the head cook.” (Huxley, 2004, p. 251). The author predicted the real situation which occurred in the middle of the XX century with Soviet genetics when Lysenko banned scientific investigations, and many

talented scientists were dismissed from their posts and deprived of their laboratories and possibilities to research unless they are permitted.

One more hero, a poet Helmholtz, faces a fateful choice. He did not want to be restricted only to support stability and state order. He is expelled from the community and exiled to some remote island to live with rebels alike. The depicted situation is similar to that of the Soviet Union, when lots of talented scientists, scholars, writers, poets, artists, actors emigrated, escaping being imposed with unsuitable morals and views. This turns out to be the straight projection on an individual, who has to make his choice either to follow the rules, “be like everyone else” or live in exile, far from the homeland. The Controller himself regrets his choice: “I was given the choice: to be sent to an island, where I could have got on with my pure science, or to be taken on to the Controllers’ Council with the prospect of succeeding in due course to an actual Controllorship. I chose this and let the science go <...> Happiness is a hard master—particularly other people’s happiness. A much harder master, if one isn’t conditioned to accept it unquestioningly, than truth.” (Huxley, 2004, p. 253). The author employs his bitter irony in a metaphoric expression of defeated hopes. The dystopian model proclaims the primacy of commonality over privacy, the necessity of caste society division, and selective suppression of those, preventing the construction of a new world.

The Director (an explanatory name for a ruler) claims: “The world’s stable now. People are happy; they get what they want, and they never want what they can’t get. They’re well off; they’re safe; they’re never ill; they’re not afraid of death; they’re blissfully ignorant of passion and old age; they’re plagued with no mothers or fathers; they’ve got no wives, or children, or lovers to feel strongly about; they’re so conditioned that they practically can’t help behaving as they ought to behave” (Huxley, 2004, p. 244–245). Everything in his words is hyperbolized; the desired things substitute the real ones. Formally, the members of the society have everything they need. They can watch films, sing songs, travel to Reservation on delta planes (Alphas, even, have some rudiments of spiritual life), nevertheless, they all are to subdue State rules. The greatest achievement of the World State is to clone human beings and condition them according to the State needs. Embryos in tubes are chemically and psychologically programmed for their whole life. As the Director comments with triumph: “Till at last, the child’s mind is these suggestions, and the sum of the suggestions is the child’s mind. And not the child’s mind only. The adult’s mind too—all his life long. The mind that judges and desires and decides—made up of these suggestions. But all these suggestions are our suggestions. Suggestions from the State.” (Huxley, 2004, p. 30). The most used lexeme in the statement is suggestions, which presents totalistic ideas of the XX century grotesquely.

6. Findings

In the course of the undertaken analysis, we detected a very special use of allusions in the novel. The title itself is an allusion to the rapturous exclamation of the heroine of Shakespeare's *Tempest*. Bitter irony becomes apparent in the course of the nightmarish description of the future society – brave, new world – the admiration and tragedy of the Savage, brought up on Shakespeare's immortal works. A. Huxley conveys his sarcasm on the 'perfection' of members and order of a developed, civilized new

world. The Savage, having been impressed and even charmed by the outward progressive signs of World State community, realizes its inner regress and feels condemned to loneliness and is destined to die.

The next sample of an allusion refers to ancient times. The name of universal tranquillizer in the World State is soma. The rulers claim: “soma, half a gramme for a half-holiday, a gramme for a weekend, two grammes for a trip to the gorgeous East, three for a dark eternity on the moon” (Huxley, 2004, p. 57) and “... if anything should go wrong, there’s soma” (Huxley, 2004, p. 245). The name of this magic remedy comes from ancient Indian mythology, where soma meant heaven drink. The welfare to everybody is possible, but through taking ambrosia to acquire a blissful forgetting. Herewith, the allusion on world cultural symbol codes historical oblivion. Through this allusion, the author also cautions people against gods’ beverage, describing the results as thoughtless, emotionless beings, automatically doing their job.

Most of the fiction authors widely use explanatory names for their characters to form a negative or positive image or making hints on some meaningful events or heroes’ features. In the analyzed novel, we traced an extended allusion, based on the anthroponymic units, which draws a reader’s attention to the author’s modernity. The protagonists Lenina and Marx are Alphas in World State. Here is the straight correlation to the names of the leaders of socialist/communist ideas of the newborn Soviet state, that is, Marx (the author of *The Capital*) and Lenin (the first leader of the first Socialist state). Their endeavour to integrate the Savage to their civilized world fails because he could not accept the subjecting of the Truth to utilitarian needs.

In our opinion, the allusions and hyperboles used are tightly combined with the antithesis, which encompasses the whole narration opposing Reservation and World State, – non-civilization to a civilized world. The appalling reality of the Reservation environment is described through Lenina’s vision: “...at the entrance to the pueblo.... The dirt, to start with, the piles of rubbish, the dust, the dogs, the flies.” (Huxley, 2004, p. 117). The disgusting description is opposed to the order and efficiency of a futuristic society: “hive of industry...”, “everything in ordered motion...” (Huxley, 2004, p. 160) ... The extended antithesis enhances the catastrophic effect of losing values and individual consciousness. Huxley’s (2004) renders his disbelief in the merits of a technologically progressive society in the phrase of his character: “Universal happiness keeps the wheels steadily turning; truth and beauty can’t.” (p. 254), which itself sounds as an opposition to the well-known expression: “Beauty / Love will save the world!”, introduced and advocated by the great writers and thinkers Wild and Dostoevsky.

All in all, we infer the performed text analysis identified the specific place of Huxley’s anti-utopia among the works alike. It possesses both unique and differential features of the genre, providing the author’s understanding and evaluation of the rational world order and its correlation with the identity of a personality in society. Employing various stylistic devices, inherent to the dystopian genre, but partially transfigured and even globalized, the author presents his doubts and cautions of two-option choice: either a ‘harmony’ of a new ordered progressive world or chaos of a real, suffering human world, as a price for freedom and personal consciousness.

7. Conclusion

One of the literary theorists Rabinovich remarked that *Brave New World* appeared to be a satire on future epoch (futuristic society of 2541), though existing already in present days (Rabinovich, 2001). Huxley focused on social problems connected with the inherent contradiction within the universal human values and their relative interpretations in various communities. On the one hand, he observes an individual, who lost the point of life; on the other hand, the author feels the necessity of some value-based code for organizing human existence and co-existence. The paradox, for Huxley, consists of the fact that human nature abhors any vacuum and cannot exist out of society. However, at the same time, while merging with it, the individual's personality faints, losing its uniqueness. Commonness and unification of mass consciousness swamp the individuality and penetrate to all the activity spheres. In our tough conviction, the detailed research of Huxley's literary work and profound analyses of worldwide events dispersed in time and space will help people to avoid future mistakes.

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