

JOHN FOWLES'S POSTMODERN REALITY ("THE FRENCH LIEUTENANT'S WOMAN")

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The present paper is aimed at studying the artistic mind of the modern English writer John Fowles as the creator of the original worldview in its postmodern style. It has been specified that British artistic culture does not demonstrate neither the extremes, peculiar to the art of "transition" or "frontier" nor sharp denial of everything that seemed inviolable. Inclining towards realistic forms of the English classics, a lot of postmodern authors, including Fowles, prefer a synthesis of the old with the new. This applies both to postmodernism and all avant-garde and neo-avant-garde movements, aimed at fundamental changing of the general ideas about the beauty and ugliness. "The French Lieutenant's Woman", written by John Fowles, proposes such a postmodern synthesis in the context of the "playing with the past" thesis.

In his novel, the author presents a special type of "new reality", corresponding to the period of the profound changes inside the movement during the period starting from the end of the 19th century till the end of the 20th century. Instead of the typical for English literature "hero in search", the novel under consideration demonstrates an existential type of a man. The above-mentioned hero, who is embodied in the images of Charles and Sarah, seeks his individual freedom and "corrects" his own destiny. It should be emphasized that gaining true freedom is possible only through overcoming various life and social obstacles associated with breaking class and social ties, as well as with great internal suffering.

Fowles's peculiar style of narration helps to reveal the main theme of the novel. The author uses postmodern irony, which is meta-irony, and pastiche. The method of "overlapping epochs" forms an original intertext whereby the semantic field of the novel increases. The literary significance of the outlined method is multifaceted: an elitist reader perceives text-subtext-intertext; a "mass" reader gets acquainted with the work at the level of an entertaining storyline.

The author of the article also analyses a mythological component of the novel "The French Lieutenant's Woman". A mention should also be made that Fowles in the analysed work acts both as a creator and a destroyer of the socio-ethical and literary myth of the Victorian era. Of primary interest to the writer was the literary myth of the time of Queen Victoria, which in the minds of readers has long been romanticized and become a legend. Therefore, the article shows the connection of everything that happens according to the tradition of English romantic narration and the principles of reformation of characters and situations that no longer correspond to the romantic worldview. The ironic understanding of the gentleman's code of honor and the object of his passion, the reduction of love conflicts and places of romantic meetings are illustrated by specific examples from the text of the novel.

The present paper has also devoted considerable attention to the psychology of the protagonists as well as the problem of the plot and compositional unity of the novel "The French Lieutenant's Woman". It is proved that the development of the storyline of the novel is a polystructural and polysemantic phenomenon. If Sarah's character combines the traditional features of both "woman with a secret" and "infernal woman", then respect for Charles's traditional aristocracy is being called into question: it is repeatedly mentioned that he did not receive a Cambridge diploma, that he is an amateur paleontologist, that he considers the possibility of getting married for money, and that there is a very strong element of carnal passion in his romantic relationship with Sarah.

The article offers the author's commentary on the compositional completion of the novel. It is argued that the trinity of the epilogue, first of all, explains the "world-chaos" antithesis. The formula of the dissipating world, according to the author of the article, was supposed to become the basis of the postmodernist text in the original version of the novel "The French Lieutenant's Woman".

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