

DUALISM IN MAXIM FRY'S STORY "THE LABYRINTHS OF ECHO"

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The theme of dualism was often used by romantic writers to emphasize the exclusivity of the hero and the depth of his inner self. Dual-reality is a concept in literature that characterizes romantic aesthetics and the opposition of the real and inner worlds in the mind of a romantic hero. At the heart of this concept is an act of rejection of the real world and an escape from its dullness by any means. Romantic heroes dislike the humdrumness, mediocrity, and dullness of the real world. For a romantic hero, the real world is too small and unable to contain all the feelings, hopes and passionate thirst for life, which is so inherent in the main characters with a rich inner self. Dual-reality gives heroes the ability to reach out to their desires and transcend the environment. Usually, the imaginary worlds of romantic heroes are extremely exotic, full of unusual, unimaginable wonders and striving to achieve everything beyond. Everything that happens in the book is associated with various images, and according to A.V. Novoseltseva: «*Writers try to reveal the chronology of events not so much through centrifugal as through centripetal organization of images, although artistic psychologism is used to identify mostly static images*» [1]. Imaginary worlds of heroes replace reality for them and they strive for them all their lives, wanting to experience their yet unknown facets. Often, such a desire leads to disappointment and the ideal world remains out of reach. However, in Maxim Fry's fantastic story «The Labyrinths of Echo», the main character manages to touch the dream and travel through his imaginary world.

The purpose of the study – is to consider the use of dual worlds in the fantastic story "Labyrinths of Echo", the use of dual worlds in urban fantasy and to reveal the motive for transferring the hero to other worlds. The relevance of the study lies in the insufficient study of the works of M. Fry by Russian literary critics.

Material and methods. The material for the study was a series of books by Max Fry «The Labyrinths of Echo». In accordance with the purpose of the work, the main methods of research are the problem-thematic and the method of figurative analysis of a work of art.

Results and their discussion. «The Labyrinths of Echo» book series was written by Svetlana Martynchik in collaboration with Igor Styopin and published under the pseudonym Maxim Fry. The books have genre features of urban fantasy and are distinguished by their peppy narrative, bright, fantastic landscapes and outstanding characters. The protagonist of the series is Sir Max, on his behalf the narration is being conducted, and it is with his imaginary world that the reader will have to get acquainted. The book begins with the introduction of the protagonist: «*First, let's dot some fundamental i's. My real name is Max...*» [2].

Further, Max tells about his environment and reveals his place in it: "For the first twenty-nine years of my life, I was a classic loser" [2]. From such a short description, one can already distinguish the negative attitude of the protagonist to the real world. In a string of weekdays, Sir Max is nothing more than a simple office worker, which we are accustomed to meet every day. Then he was just "Max" and by his first debut in the heart of the worlds "Echo" will be transformed into "Sir Max", dressed in the mantle of

death and very pleased with his stay far from his homeland. Throughout the book, the protagonist will separate the “then Max” from himself more than once, which prompts the reader to the existence of a dual world that has changed the hero beyond recognition. In the real world, Max fails to realize himself and achieve life goals, of which he does not have so many. Work does not bring him pleasure, he spends his free time idly and each of his novels ends in failure: *«All my love affairs sooner or later ended in a slap in the same way, I could get used to it. You have to pay for everything - if you resolutely refuse to accept some of the fundamental principles of human existence, be prepared that sooner or later those around you will stop accepting you yourself»* [2].

Even from the first lines in the main character, a romantic dreamer is guessed, passionately longing to leave his native world. His reasoning can arouse sympathy in the modern reader, because Max's reasoning can be close to people stuck in the same everyday life. Many may recall Max himself, but not many may dream of Sir Juffin Halley. It is with this character that Max's immersion into all the subtleties of white magic and travels through Echo begins. According to the description of the protagonist, Juffin will seem to the reader as a sort of kind wizard who extended his hand to the desperate Fry: *«This cheerful gentleman with the manners of either an Eastern emperor or a circus ringmaster immediately won the heart of that former Max, whom I still remember»* [2]. It is worth noting that Max describes the appearance of almost all the characters in the book with the help of portraits of famous personalities of his homeland: *«Long Sir Lonley-Lockley Pit with the face of the Charlie Watts monument, as always in white»* [2]. This detail reflects the protagonist's attachment to the real world. In one of the chapters, he, by chance, will be at home. This is one of the most dramatic scenes in the entire series of books, because Max will perceive the return to the real world as a tragedy: *«But, remembering my life in Echo, I foolishly decided that it was a dream. Just a long fantastic dream, but finally ended»* [2]. The main character will be able to return to his imaginary world, where he learns that he was destined to be in it. The mysterious world of "Echo" has been waiting for him since childhood, when he read a book about the green door. Max managed to realize himself and replaced "Echo" with his real world: *«By evening, I suddenly realized that I really wanted to go home. It doesn't look like me at all, I usually enjoy what I have with might and main, so I start to yearn for home only when I am on the outskirts of Echo»* [2].

Conclusion. Max Fry's story "The Labyrinths of Echo" gained popularity for its vivid images and a topic that is relevant to readers. The storytelling style is unusual and captures from the first lines. Particular attention is paid to innovation in the urban fantasy genre and the harmonious use of the dual world technique in it. The story about the journey of an ordinary office worker to the country of dreams teaches you to always follow your goal and rely only on yourself. The adventures of the great Sir Max will not leave indifferent the same cheerful, romantic natures like himself. In “The Labyrinths of Echo” book series, the dual world turns the story of a mere dreamer into reality.

1. Navaseltsava, G.V. Novel Series as an Aesthetic Phenomenon in the Belarussian Prose of the Last Third of the 20th Century/ G.V. Navaseltsava. – Vitebsk: VSU named after P.M. Masharov, 2019. – T. 29. – P. 168–173. URL: <https://rep.vsu.by/bitstream/123456789/18787/4/168-173.pdf> (date of access 05.11.2022).

2. Fry, M. The Labyrinths of Echo / M. Fry. – M., 2000. – P. 2362.