

*Chobanyuk M. M.,**Candidate of Philological Sciences,**Associate Professor of the Department of English Language Practice and Methods of its Teaching**Drohobych Ivan Franko State Pedagogical University**<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6047-4852>*

CREATIVITY OF J. FOWLES: ORIGINALITY OR TRADITION

Summary. The peculiarities of the functioning of literature in the second half of the 20th century are determined by the active borrowing of citations of works of past eras to create new artistic texts. In this context, the study of the work of J. Fowles, who constantly uses the heritage of the literature of the previous era, is undoubtedly relevant.

The article is devoted to an attempt to determine the originality of J. Fowles' work as a component of the modern literary process, its interrelationships with the artistic and philosophical searches of European postmodern writers. Attempts to analyze the artistic levels of the story outline the specifics of the functioning of the components of the postmodern poetic discourse in the writer's work.

The novel «The French Lieutenant's Woman» is considered the most perfect example of the writer's work. It is proved that this work is a combination of elements of realistic and postmodern style. The author relies on the holistic experience of human existence and, against the background of mistrust of the humanistic perspective or even its scanning, remains faithful to the point of view of non-things, according to which art should focus on man and his problems. It is noted that his works are vivid examples of a new literary trend, they enriched English prose with new themes, images, and motifs. Fowles' work shows the intense creative search of the writer, his preoccupation with the problems of society and the desire to act, to change something, to improve it with the help of the poetic word, and it is revealed through ideological saturation, poetic experiments and extraordinary thinking.

It is noted that the multi-genre work of the artist is subordinated to the leading problem of his philosophy: to show the ways of achieving self-awareness as a necessary condition for gaining freedom. Fowles does not accept the postmodern idea of dehumanization of humanity, but uses postmodern techniques of artistic writing- intertextuality, parody, irony, allusions, the principle of «death of the author», etc. The genre and stylistic diversity of his creative assets is a whole world in which equal components are the aesthetic principle and existential philosophizing, devotion to tradition and desire for experimentation, fiction and reality, past and present, high poetics and strict condemnation of the flaws of the 20th century.

Key words: philosophy, humanism, postmodernism, tradition, context, game.

Statement of the problem. The third millennium in Ukrainian literary studies «was marked by an increase in attention to modern methods of analysis of an artistic work, to a deepening of philosophizing in the interpretation of works of art. The process of further development of the mainland science of literature depends on the rethinking of previous historical experience, a new non-engaged reading of already known works and the need to involve in this process the scientific achievements of modern

Ukrainian scholars» [1, p. 3]. Literature and art «without sacred secrets and spiritual space, just like a person without water and sun, can live only in forms of imitation» [2, p. 98]. The heroes of John Fowles' novels, like most of the heroes of the spoken word artists that we analyze, solve existential problems – human freedom, the confrontation between man and society, loneliness and love. An attempt to determine the originality of J. Fowles' work as a component of the modern literary process outlines the specifics of the functioning of the components of postmodern poetic discourse in the writer's work.

Analysis of recent research. Having analyzed the history of the issue, we came to the conclusion that a small number of publications by Ukrainian literary research scholars (O. Mikhilov, M. Chobanyuk, K. Melnikova, D. Tarasova, V. Bilyavska) are devoted to this topic. This is primarily due to the fact that John Fowles can be called a «modern» writer, so his works have not yet been studied so comprehensively and in-depth that it is possible to talk about any thorough in-depth studies of his work. Of course, some literary critics devoted a number of publications to the study of certain aspects of the writer's work, but as for the given topic, it can be considered a «white spot» in the context of his work.

The purpose of the article is to consider the features of humanism as a philosophy of the creative method of John Fowles and to analyze the features of the game as a model of world perception in the novel «The French Lieutenant's Woman» [3].

Presentation of the main material of the research. John Robert Fowles (1926–2005) is an English writer who entered literature in the 60s of the last century and gained recognition as the mouthpiece of English postmodernism. His works – novels, short stories, essays – despite the variety of themes and images, the wealth of techniques of artistic representation – are united by the leading problem for his work: «the formation of self-awareness as a necessary condition for achieving freedom» [4, p. 224].

The postmodern world view is characterized by the statement that any attempts to construct a complete and unalternative model of the world, to establish a hierarchical order or a system of priorities are meaningless and doomed to failure in advance. Ideas about the impossibility of the existence of an individual destiny and the disappearance of a specific human personality led to a shortage of humanism in postmodern literature.

Against the general background of experiments and theorizing in art and literature, Fowles unexpectedly declares in one of the interviews: «I am a humanist number one. I believe in humanism, which in a philosophical sense has collapsed. It is very difficult to justify it, just as it is impossible to build any practical politics on the fact that you are a humanist. And, nevertheless, I remain one» [5, p. 333]. The statement contains a deliberate

paradox: the author believes in what has failed. All this suggests that Fowles' humanism is a special kind of humanism.

Collections of essays, interviews, and diaries show that the author relies on the holistic experience of human existence and, against the background of the abolition of any humanistic perspective, remains faithful to the view of things that goes back to Aristotle, according to which art should focus on man and his problems.

Fowles believes in the possibility of the existence of a complete personality of a person and in his ability to improve himself. As the writer's work shows, he skillfully plays with various traditional novel genres, but the leading one for him is the genre of the novel of education (which, it seems to us, is fundamental for the author's concept of the method).

The desire to look into everyday reality, belief in moral and ethical categories, attention to the problems of upbringing and education – all this gives reason to talk about Fowles as a writer who is oriented towards classical humanism, in which a person makes himself a spiritual being in all respects.

Of particular importance in characterizing Fowles' humanism are philosophical concepts that differ in dialectical perception of the world. We are primarily talking about Hercules, under whose influence the collection of essays «Aristos» (1964) was written. Fowles was close to the ancient philosopher's ideas about eternal change and development, struggle and unity of opposites. Contradictions, from the point of view of Fowles, are the impetus for development. The philosophy of Socrates (Fowles calls him «the first existentialist»), in which a person's acquisition of truth occurs through initial confusion and overcoming limited ideas in the process of dialogue, also turned out to be close to the writer of the 20th century.

Fowles experienced the great influence of Montaigne's humanistic skepticism: «I have always loved Montaigne very much. He generally seems to me one of the most intellectually sound and attractive Europeans who ever lived, and it was he who set me on the path of humanism, which I have followed ever since» [5, c. 335]. Montaigne's philosophical concept is dominated by the belief in the unreliability of human knowledge. The philosopher considers that «a person cannot know absolute truth, that all truths recognized by us as absolute are nothing more than relative» [6]. For his part, Fowles declares: «Everything in the world is relative. There is nothing absolute, except for our – and yours and mine – unconditional ignorance. We can pretend that we know and understand everything in the world, but we can never know or understand this. And least of all we are able to understand how happy we are in the fact that we live 'here and now'» [7, p. 571–572].

Fowles also considers man to be the author of his own will. «The real purpose of a person,» the author notes, «is to become a magician himself» [7, p. 334], that is, the master of his own life.

Fowles' skepticism differs from the nihilistic skepticism of postmodernists and is moderate in nature. The author considers a person's ability to doubt to be his fundamental feature and sees the inner kinship of reason and freedom. The writer criticizes a self-contained and in this sense a dogmatic mind, incapable of recognizing probability, chaos, instability, and the dynamics of the very nature of the world. All his objections, doubts and mockery of accepted systems and stereotypes are generated by a fundamental interest in man and his problems. This is what gives the writer reason to call himself «humanist number one». Like the postmodernists, Fowles

does not have a final criterion of truth, but, unlike them, the author believes in some positive principle that prevents him from falling into the relative abyss.

John Fowles's novel «The French Lieutenant's Wife» was published in 1969, and immediately took an «honorable» place in the anthology of the latest novel. The novel is divided into chapters that combine into larger elements of the composition, for example: a description of the lives of Charles Smithson and Ernestine, Charles and Sarah Woodruff, Sam and Mary, and others. The novel consists of several stories and endings. J. Fowles plays with space and time: the main action takes place in Victorian England, but Smithson's journey through Europe and America is also depicted, and the author constantly sends the reader back to the 20th century. All this makes up the chronotope of the novel, the feature of which is, first of all, the change of eras, compaction, stretching of the action in space. The form, composition, intertextuality, hypertextuality of J. Fowles's novel are all just external layers of game elements.

The game itself in the novel takes place on the philosophical, religious, psychological levels, as well as on the worldview level. She appears as a model of world perception (author's and character's). On the one hand, the conservative part of society enters the fight, and on the other – a new force.

In one of his essays, Fowles states: «Humanism for me is primarily a state of dislike or aversion to violence. In a certain sense, it is a philosophy of compromise» [8, p. 113]. According to the author, a humanist «observes the «golden mean» of common sense, the middle of the road and takes into account the opinions of both sides; he wins respect, but does not capture the imagination» [7, p. 217].

Conclusions. John Fowles is one of the representatives of postmodern literature, the most perfect example of which is his novel «The French Lieutenant's Wife». This work is a combination of elements of realist and postmodern style. The author relies on the holistic experience of human existence and, against the background of mistrust of the humanistic perspective or even its scanning, remains faithful to the view of non-things, according to which art should focus on a person and his problems. His works are vivid examples of a new literary direction, they enriched English prose with new themes, images, and motifs.

Fowles's work testifies to the intense creative search of the writer, his preoccupation with the problems of society and the desire to act, to change something, to improve it with the help of the poetic word, and it is revealed through ideological saturation, poetic experiments and extraordinary thinking.

The creativity of J. Fowles was evaluated by critics as an extraordinary phenomenon of the post-war period. His multi-genre output is subordinated to the leading problem: to show the ways of achieving self-awareness as a necessary condition for gaining freedom. Fowles does not accept the postmodern idea of dehumanization of humanity, but uses postmodern techniques of artistic writing – intertextuality, parody, irony, allusions, the principle of «death of the author», etc. The genre and stylistic diversity of his creative assets is a whole world in which equal components are the aesthetic principle and existential philosophizing, devotion to tradition and desire for experimentation, fiction and reality, past and present, high poetics and strict condemnation of the flaws of the 20th century.

Roman J. Fowles' «The French Lieutenant's Wife» is a vivid example of a model of playing with the text and, accordingly, with

the reader's consciousness. It is no coincidence that the work has several endings, one of which crystallizes already in the middle of the work of the English writer, and the other two appear in the final sections as a symbol of the duality of the world.

«The French Lieutenant's Woman» is a postmodern novel with a broad artistic canvas, the basis of which is woven intertextuality, deep psychology of the heroes' characters, philosophical reflections on the world structure and man's place in the world. All this is revealed in the process of the game, which acts as an impulse for intellectual improvement in the work.

The leading idea of this conditional historical work is to compare the past and present centuries, to investigate the question of a person looking for himself, to trace how society solves the eternal problem of humanism, which is key in literature.

The writer very often resorted to a literary game: he played both with his characters and with the reader, often showed the appearance instead of the essence, and only later provided opportunities to learn the truth, and sometimes only to get closer to it. Unrepeatable in terms of his artistic skill and ability to always find the only necessary word, he created a unique game on the lexical level as well.

Therefore, «the modern science of literature, having survived the radical transformations of the second half of the 20th century, no longer aspires to a single meta-theory and develops in a multi-vector manner, testifying to the multiplicity and alternative approaches to the study of the artistic text as the norm of the scientific understanding of the word» [9, p. 4]. Despite this, it shows repeated attempts to find a unifying basis, a universal research concept, a dominant feature around which different theories of the text could be built.

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Чобанюк М. Творчість Дж. Фаулза: самотність чи традиція

Анотація. Особливості функціонування літератури в другій половині ХХ сторіччя визначаються активним запозиченням цитування творів минулих епох для створення нових художніх текстів. У цьому контексті дослідження творчості Дж. Фаулза, який повсякчасно послуговується надбанням літератури попередньої доби, без сумніву є актуальним.

Стаття присвячена спробі визначення самотності творчості Дж. Фаулза як складової сучасного літературного процесу, її взаємозв'язків з художньо-філософськими пошуками європейських письменників-постмодерністів. Спроби аналізу художніх рівнів оповідання окреслюють специфіку функціонування у творчості письменника складових постмодерністського поетичного дискурсу.

Найдовершенішим зразком творчості письменника називають роман «Жінка французького лейтенанта». Доведено, що цей твір є поєднанням елементів реалістичного та постмодерністського стилю. Автор спирається на цілісний досвід людського буття і на тлі недовіри до гуманістичної перспективи або навіть її сканування залишається вірний тому погляду не речі, згідно з яким мистецтво має орієнтуватися на людину та її проблеми. Зазначено, що його твори є яскравими прикладами нового літературного напрямку, вони збагатили англійську прозу новими темами, образами, мотивами. Творчість Фаулза свідчить про напружений творчий пошук письменника, його переймання проблемами суспільства та прагнення діяти, щось змінити, покращити за допомогою поетичного слова, і розкривається вона через ідейну насиченість, поетичні експерименти та неординарність мислення.

Зазначено, що різножанровий доробок митця підпорядкований провідній проблемі його філософії: показати шляхи досягнення самосвідомості як обов'язкової умови здобуття свободи. Фаулз не сприймає постмодерної ідеї дегуманізації людства, але використовує постмодерні прийоми художнього письма – інтертекстуальність, пародіювання, іронію, аллюзію, принцип «смерті автора» тощо. Жанрове та стиліове розмаїття його творчих надбань – це цілісний світ, у якому рівноправними складовими є естетичне начало та екзистенційне філософування, відданість традиції та прагнення експерименту, вигадка та реальність, минуле та сучасне, висока поетичність та суворий осуд вад ХХ ст.

Ключові слова: філософія, гуманізм, постмодернізм, традиція, контекст, гра.