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Features of the poetics of contemporary antiutopia (based on the of the trilogy "The Time" by Yuri Shcherbak¹)

Поетологічні особливості сучасної антиутопії (на матеріалі трилогії "Час" Юрія Щербака)

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Abstract


The article is devoted to the study of genre specificity, means of artistic modeling of the image of the main character, and the problem-thematic section of Yu. Shcherbak's "The Time" trilogy as important poetic features of the contemporary antiutopia. The analysis was carried out using general scientific (analysis, synthesis, description) and special literary methods (biographical, genetic, imagological and hermeneutic). The research emphasizes the antiutopian dominant of "The Time" trilogy, which is combined with certain features of a political novel, cautionary novel, fiction (elements of science fiction), adventure novel, detective story, etc. It was found out that in his antiutopias Yu. Shcherbak creates his own model of the


Анотація

Стаття присвячена дослідженню жанрової специфіки, засобів художнього моделювання образу головного героя та проблемно-тематичному зрізу трилогії "Час" Ю. Щербака як важливих поетологічних особливостей сучасної антиутопії. Аналіз здійснено з використанням загальнонаукових (аналіз, синтез, опис) та спеціальних літературознавчих методів (біографічний, генетичний, імагологічний та герменевтичний). У дослідженні акцентована антиутопічна домінанта трилогії "Час", що поєднується з окремими ознаками політичного роману, роману-застереження, фантастики (елементи наукової фантастики), пригодницького роману, детективу тощо.


¹ In the article, we use the abbreviated name of the works "The Smertohryst's Time", "The Time of the Big Game" and "The Time of the Tyrant", or "The Time" trilogy. The full title is "The Smertohryst's Time. Mirage of 2077", "The Time of the Big Game. Phantoms of 2079" and "The Time of the Tyrant. The insight of 2084".

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
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character of the future, whose leadership qualities, life experience and orientation to traditional Ukrainian values enabled spiritual renewal, contributed to finding one's place in the world and helped to become a winner in the eternal conflict "man-system". It was determined that the problem-thematic level of the novels is understood through the disclosure of the inner world of the main character with the help of monologues, dialogues, reflections, etc. In the trilogy, the "eternal" philosophical and topical problems of today are actualized.

Keywords: character, genre, antiutopia, problems, poetics, literature, Christianity, culture.

З'ясовано, що у своїх антиутопіях Ю. Щербак створює влясну модель героя майбутнього, лідерські якості, життєвий досвід та орієнтація на традиційні українські цінності якого уможливили духовне оновлення, сприяли віднайденню свого місця у світі та допомогли стати переможцем а одвічному конфлікті "людина-система". Визначено, що проблемно-тематичний рівень романів "Час смертохристів", "Час великої гри" та "Час тирана" осмислюється через розкриття внутрішнього світу головного героя за допомогою монологів, діалогів, роздумів тощо. У трилогії актуалізовано "вічні" філософські та актуальні проблеми сьогодення.

Ключові слова: герой, жанр, антиутопія, проблематика, поетика, література, християнство, культура.

Introduction

At the end of the 20th – at the beginning of the 21st century, under the influence of historical, social and political factors, antiutopia became active in world literature, which was originally a philosophical and critical denial of utopia, and later took shape as an original genre (Solovyova, 2011, p. 58). The term "utopia" ("u" is no and "topos" is a place, i.e. a country that does not exist) comes from the title of the work "The Golden Book, as useful as it is entertaining, about the best system of the state and about the new island of Utopia" or abbreviated "Utopia" by T. More (2023). Yu. Kovaliv notes that the basis of this genre is "fiction, a dream" and it can sometimes be considered as "a kind of science fiction in which modernity is criticized" (2007b, p. 517). Utopia has genre features of myth, fairy tale, and legend. It widely presents techniques of visions, dreams, delusions, memories, etc. The ideological and thematic basis of these works was the prediction of possible ways of creating and implementing ideal models of the social and political system. This polemic gave rise to the anti-genre.

In contemporary scientific discourse, there is an opinion that the specific features of antiutopia can be traced back to the literature of antiquity (Zozulya, 2022, p. 8). Investigating the genesis of the phenomenon, Yu. Kovaliv singles out several stages of development: 1) attempts to refute the ideas of Plato, T. More, F. Bacon, T. Campanella, K. Marx, V. Lenin, etc., which took place until the end of the 19th century (for example, "Leviathan" by T. Hobbes, "The Fable of the Bees, or Private Vices – Common Benefit" by B. Mandeville, etc.); 2) at the end of the 19th – at the beginning of the 20th century, a combination of antiutopia and science fiction took place, and a new genre appeared: futuristic cautionary novels ("The Time Machine" by H. Wells, "It's Impossible with Us" by S. Lewis, "War with salamanders" by K. Chapek, "Memories of the Future" by R. Knox, "Frankenstein" by M. Shelley, etc.).

In order to avoid terminological inconsistency, in this study we use the concept of "antiutopia", and not the common synonym of the mentioned concept of "dystopia" (Ivanova, 2020, p. 79). We adhere to the opinion of Yu. Kovaliv, who understands antiutopia as "an alternative to phantom progressivism, an image in fiction of dangerous consequences associated with irresponsible, sometimes criminal experimentation on humanity for its 'improvement', the use of illusory, outwardly attractive social and pedagogical ideals" (2007a, p. 75). At the same time, he regards dystopia as a narrower concept and suggests considering it as a critique of totalitarian regimes and utopias and as a "philosophical and artistic genre in the literature of the 20th century, the works of which depicted a society that overcame the schematic world of utopias saturated with mechanical ideals and their pathological incarnations in the form of a communist regime and turned into a faceless mass of people devoid of memory" (p. 285). A. Solovyova has a unanimous opinion, noting that dystopia artistically models an "ideally bad society" and is "an image of a not yet existing social evil, a deeply personal evil. Antiutopia, on the other hand, is usually aimed at debunking utopian tendencies (in particular, ridiculing the fascination of the NTR)" (2011, p. 58). I. Parkhomenko is convinced that "dystopia and antiutopia consider moral and social problems of society, their topics cover almost all spheres of human

existence, but dystopia uses more pessimistic vectors of describing the future” (2011, p. 6). In the study, we agree with these arguments of scientists and consider antiutopia as a complex metagenre, which, having its characteristic features, is complicated by elements of other genres in accordance with the author’s artistic intention.

Literature Review

Despite the fact that the specific features of antiutopia began to appear in antiquity and were finally formed in the works of writers of the late 20th and early 21st centuries, discussions continue today, mainly regarding terminology (several concepts are used in parallel, in particular the terms “antiutopia” and “dystopia”, which was already mentioned at the beginning of the article) and geneological dominants of such literary works. The problem of the genre is that the writings of scientists emphasize various artistic features in the writer’s modeling of the artistic world. Contemporary researchers single out in dystopian novels 1) fantastic elements (for example, travel in time and space, scientific achievements and inventions, etc.), a combination of historical realities and fiction, the creation of futuristic models of the development of real countries and societies (Kiyak, 2012; Zozulya, 2022; Mozul, 2020; Khorob, 2017); 2) philosophizing – the peculiarities of the concept of the world and man in it are investigated (Parkhomenko, 2011), etc.

In the 20th century, antiutopia becomes one of the leading literary genres, which, artistically modeling the future, comprehends “eternal” philosophical themes and current problems of the present. These dominants can be traced in the novels of J. Orwell “1984” (1950), H. Wells “The Time Machine” (1992a), “War of the Worlds” (1992b), R. Bradbury “Fahrenheit 451” (1953), K. Vonnegut “Mechanical piano, or Utopia 14” (1969), E. Burgess “1985” (1978) and others. In Ukrainian literature, antiutopia began to develop in the 20s-60s of the last century, deepened and became more complicated at the end of the 20th – at the beginning of the 21st century. Examples of the genre include “Solar Machine” by V. Vynnychenko (2015), “Chronos” by T. Antipovych (2011), “Qin Huan Gon” by H. Tarasyuk (2008) and others. An important step for the development of modern antiutopia was the publication in 2011-2014 of Yu. Shcherbak’s trilogy (2023a; 2023b; 2021), which became an original phenomenon in the history of modern Ukrainian literature, attracting attention with its topical issues (mainly the understanding of the past, present and forecasting of the future of Ukraine as a state in the geopolitical context, the study of the impact of globalization on the national and individual identity of a person, the emphasis on universal and Ukrainian moral and ethical values, the emphasis on environmental issues, etc.) and its own interpretation of the antiutopian canon, and therefore requires a thorough and versatile study that will help trace the continuity of the world literary tradition in the work of a contemporary Ukrainian writer.

Analyzing the dystopian trilogy of Yu. Shcherbak, we turn to the study of the poetic features of the artistic text (Kovaliv, 2007b, p. 233-236), which will allow us to conduct a thorough analysis of the main traditional antiutopian features and original techniques in the “Time” trilogy. Considering the specifics of antiutopia, let’s turn to the work of G. Sabat “In the labyrinths of utopia and antiutopia” (2002), where the following characteristic features of antiutopia are noted: creating an image of a character of the future, traveling in time and space, philosophical understanding of current problems through modeling the future, artistic interpretation of current and insurmountable problems, the main driving force of the plot is the “man-system” conflict, the process of human regeneration, character splitting, etc.

Methodology

The complex nature of the research determined the application of general scientific (*analysis, synthesis, description*) and specific literary methods, namely: *biographical, genetic, imagological and hermeneutic methods*. The *biographical method* helped to clarify the influence of facts from the writer’s life that influenced the formation of the concept of the artistic world of the trilogy. The *genetic method* was used to determine the genre specificity and narrative strategies of the works. The *imagological method* contributed to the understanding of the concept of the character of antiutopia. The *hermeneutic method* made it possible to understand the problems of Yu. Shcherbak’s novels.

Results and Discussion

The creative work of the contemporary Ukrainian writer Yuriy Shcherbak attracts attention with its genre-stylistic versatility, topical issues and accentuation of immutable moral and ethical values. The author is a multifaceted personality who combined the activities of a publicist, a doctor, and a political figure. The

accumulated life experience and acquired knowledge found an artistic interpretation in artistic work. The writer made his debut in the mid-1950s in the realm of short prose (Maslenko, 2021) in the “sixties” movement relevant at the time, and in his subsequent work researchers find features of postmodernism (Melezhik, 2016), modernism, constructivism, “chimeric prose” (genealogically close to magical realism), impressionism, etc. (Kuznetsova, 2013). In the 90s of the 20th century, Yu. Shcherbak began political and civic activities, which suspended the writing of literary works.

Medical education and socio-political activity led to Yu. Shcherbak’s interest in history, issues of politics, geopolitics, state formation, culture and religion, problems of ecology, health preservation, scientific and technological progress, etc. Working as the ambassador of Ukraine in Israel, Canada and Mexico, he enriched his knowledge in these areas. The writer was interested in modern journalism, read works banned in the Soviet Union, which helped to deepen the understanding of the causes and consequences of world-historical events and saturated his works with political themes. J. Orwell’s novel “1984” was especially admired by Yu. Shcherbak, which directed his creative search to mastering the genre-stylistic features of dystopia, which became the basis for modeling the artistic world of his own works. Modern critics, in particular K. Rodyk (2022), focus on the “1984” scenery”, which is constantly found in the “Time” trilogy, in which the novelist realized the author’s intention to predict the future of Ukraine and the world, relying on the acquired knowledge about the essence of political processes and a significant life experience.

The novels “The Smertohryst’s Time”, “The Time of the Big Game” and “The Time of the Tyrant” by Yu. Shcherbak are a trilogy, i.e. a cycle of literary works, which “consists of three independent parts, united by a common plot and idea” (Kovaliv, 2007b, p. 500). M. Slaboshpytsky rightly notes that, writing these works, the writer sought to create “not just a political antiutopia, a textbook thriller”, but “this is the concentration and artistic crystallization of dangerous trends in the political life of Ukraine and the whole world” (Bila, 2011). The original approach to the creation of artistic reality intensified the controversy regarding the genetic nature and stylistic dominants of the trilogy. In the works of the contemporary researchers, we find the following views on the genre affiliation of Yu. Shcherbak’s novels: 1) M. Slaboshpytskiy (S. Khorob (2017) is a antiutopia within the fantasy metagenre; 2) Ya. Dubynyanska (2012) – fiction; 3) K. Shabal (2019) – an antiutopian political novel; 4) O. Golnyk (2012) – postmodern dystopia (caused by anthropocentricity), political pamphlet; 5) M. Kiryachok, A. Melnyk (2020, p. 105) – “combination of various metagenres living within the limits of adventure prose”; 6) M. Kiryachok (2015) – postmodern apocalyptic novel. So, in the contemporary literary and critical discourse, a multiplicity of interpretations of the genre nature of “The Time” trilogy can be traced. In this study, we rely on the opinion of Yu. Shcherbak himself, who defines the genre of his works as a sharp political thriller and a antiutopia (Dorosh, 2011). “When I wrote these books, I tried to think about how the reality in which we lived and live can be continued in the future, such a grotesque and scary, unpredictable world”, – the author emphasizes (Semen, 2023).

Based on the contemporary studies of the poetics of antiutopia, in particular genetic specificity, (Ivanova, 2020; Ikonnikova, 2007; Kiryachok & Melnyk, 2020; Sabat, 2002; Kharlan, 2008), we note the main characteristic features of this genre in “The Time” trilogy. First, Yu. Shcherbak made an attempt to artistically model the future of Ukraine in the context of world history (does not invent a country or society, but predicts a possible path of the future based on historical and political realities), focusing on modeling the path of becoming a leader, head of state character Ihor Hayduk (the plot has a characterological function). Secondly, the novels depict a relatively near future (the second half of the 21st century) with an emphasis on the negative qualities of this world, where the decline of moral and ethical values, the distortion of religious teachings, the degradation of art (that is, the emergence of “anti-humane art that promotes depravity, violence and other social vices (Shevtsova et al., 2024, p. 144), pseudo-democracy, control over representatives of society (which are mainly “consumers”, “gray faceless mass”) and the destruction of ideological opponents among them, the destructive influence of mass media on human consciousness, ignoring the consequences of misinformation, which “may lead to crimes against the national security interests of the state, mass riots or damage to the international authority of any country in the world” (Khmyrov et al., 2023, p. 94), etc. Since the main task of the antiutopian novel is to refute the utopian ideal picture of the life of society, Yu. Shcherbak actively uses the technique of allusion, irony, and satire, which, in combination with the grotesque, is an important artistic tool. “Recognizability of many situations depicted by the author”, – notes researcher O. Golnyk (2012), “is the satirical strategy chosen by him to expose the problems of today, the frankness of the writer’s assessments, the direct impact on the reader’s consciousness thanks to grotesques, allusions, and satirical contrasts”. Therefore, the author depicts Ukrainian society at the end of the 21st century as a reflection of modernity in the mirror of satirical thought.

For example, in the novel “The Smertohryst’s Time” in one of the episodes, a combination of high style and parody of art can be traced, creating a grotesque picture. This is a story about the inauguration of the young president Klinkevich, the murderer of his predecessor, Hetman Mahun: “A close-up on the screen showed the hands of the new president – long fingers and pearly glittering nails. A shimmer suddenly spread across the keyboard in Chopin’s elegiac opening passage <...> when suddenly, after the solemn beats of the overture, the piano melody of ‘Murka’ sounded – the anthem of the criminal dungeon, which has turned 150 years since the time when this music inspired the Odessa robbers” (Shcherbak, 2023a, p. 382). Thirdly, the trilogy updates the understanding of “eternal” philosophical problems related to human existence and focuses on the analysis of the origins of the contemporary problems (historical, political, cultural, social, religious). Fourthly, the writer emphasizes the problem of scientific and technological progress and its negative impact on humanity (biological weapons, computer technologies, military industry, nuclear weapons, the discovery of the elemental taimon particle, etc.), which allows us to comment on the elements of the cautionary novel and science fiction. Fifth, the novels present secularized Exarch-religions: in the first two novels, the teachings of the death christ as a substitute for Christianity, in the third – “total jihad” as a militant form of Islam, proclaimed by the state ideology of the new world order by the conqueror Omar. “The Time” trilogy has certain features of a political novel “in which political ideas are dominant, or in which the political situation is the main object of artistic representation” (Shabal, 2015), because the author predicts political processes in Ukraine and the world at the end of the 21st century. It is appropriate to turn to the structure of a political novel proposed by J. Davidson, where: the plot of the novel is politics, the goal is conviction, and the literary means are any, depending on the need (Davidson, 1961, p. 851). In the novels of Yu. Shcherbak, the often polar views of different characters who belong to different political forces are repeatedly expressed on the historical past of Ukraine and its future development paths. Their representatives are trying to convince Haiduk to join them, because they understand that his knowledge and qualities will help them win. The protagonist, having become the Coordinator of the State (an analogue of the President), orienting himself to his inner feeling and experience, chooses the path of independent development of the country. “You don’t know Ukrainians. We are not only the people of the Plow, but also the people of Chablis. We are free, proud and militant”, – Haiduk remarks to his ideological opponent Creida (Shcherbak, 2021, p. 432). The main idea of the novels is the conviction that only an appeal to cultural, religious and moral traditions, awareness of one’s national identity can save Ukrainians in the midst of geopolitical and environmental disasters. The main character realizes this and finds the strength to overcome the system. But he again faces a difficult path of struggle with the authorities, already in his own mind. So, the political background is the background on which the history of a person is depicted, who, being in the closest circle of world political figures and in the circle of constant political intrigues, seeks to overcome the system of total ideological enslavement of people, gradually self-actualizes the genetically laid characteristics of a leader, the head of state. V. Shevchuk (2015) is convinced that the writer comprehends “the dialectic of power, life, love, pride, sacrifice, everything that creates the history of the world and the destiny of man”. So, “The Time” trilogy has a didactic orientation characteristic of antiutopia. The image of the main character, as well as genre dominants, is an important element of the poetics of antiutopian novels. The protagonist of the “The Time” trilogy is the Ukrainian intelligence general Ihor Haiduk, who for a certain period of his life lived in the Confederation of North American States (the USA no longer exists in the writer’s artistic world), first studying, and then working in his own intelligence bureau, which aimed to strengthen partnership relations and exchange of technologies. The plot develops rapidly after the leadership of both countries realized the hidden threat in this person, because he has information about all politicians, businessmen, and public figures, and it is not known how he can use it during global political changes. The character is summoned to Ukraine, where he finds himself surrounded by constant political intrigues, mortal danger and psychological tests.

Thus, the first important problem of the trilogy is the search for a purpose in life, that is, self-identification (individual and national) of the protagonist as a member of Ukrainian society and self-actualization as a leader, defender of the state and its people. Yu. Shcherbak traces the evolution of the worldview of the character of a man who feels the consequences of globalization. For example, at the beginning of the first novel the character’s indifference to the problems of national history, identity, culture or religion is emphasized. In the secret dossier for the president of the co-federation, Wang Li, the following description of the main character is given: “Haiduk is a highly qualified technocrat who does not take part in the political struggle” (Shcherbak, 2023a, p. 34). Since the author repeatedly emphasizes the importance of religion on the religiosity of Ukrainians, faith will be interpreted as a criterion of national identity. That is why an important step on the way to finding a purpose in life for the character is the understanding of Christianity as an important factor in preserving a person as an individual and the Ukrainian nation from spiritual and physical destruction. The writer notes that although the character had not previously thought

about the issue of his spiritual life, he always tried to act honestly in various life situations, not to violate unwritten ethical and moral rules or break the law. These life principles were passed on to him at the genetic level from a believing mother. In the first novel of the trilogy, the Haiduk at the state level strives to oppose the sect of death christs, which is supported by the Black Horde, which is hostile to Ukraine. As the plot unfolds, he gradually realizes the importance of the figure of Jesus in world history, in the life of every single person, and in his own life as well, which enables his spiritual renewal and personal meeting with the Son of God in the "Time of the Great Game". In the last novel of the trilogy, the character uses his power to implement the idea of uniting Eastern and Western Christianity to counter the "global jihad" of Sheikh Omar al-Bakr. Awareness of the meaning of Christianity changes the life position of the character to an active one, actualizes the process of introspection. After the meeting with Jesus and the resurrection after a fatal wound, the character begins to realize his life mission and being chosen by God.

The image of Haiduk corresponds to the character of antiutopia, who "necessarily stands out against the general background of standardization and leveling, individuals with a rich spiritual world, capable of deep intellectual and analytical thinking, courageous actions, courageous thoughts" (Sabat, 2002, p. 100). Like every character of antiutopian novels, he must make a choice: obey the system, support the prevailing ideology, or fight against it, first to save his life, and then to save the country. The author explains his position in life as follows: "For Hajduk – a military man and a scientist – the concepts 'my team', 'my people', 'guys who can be trusted' were sacred. Neither the family, nor any party and political movement (a confluence of treasonous gossips, united (rather – separated) by the lust for power) were of no value to Haiduk" (Shcherbak, 2023a, p. 40). In the first novel of the trilogy, the protagonist actualizes his knowledge, professional qualities and experience in order to survive and not succumb to the system. He repeatedly repeats that he is not a politician, but an intelligence officer, but he understands that no one but him can help the state. In "Time of the Big Game", Ihor, having survived nuclear explosions and the Great Darkness, sees himself as someone who must not only survive, but also overcome the system of power. In 2079, he led a successful coup and installed a military dictatorship in the country to replace a populist pseudo-democracy. "It was a fairly liberal model of establishing the necessary discipline in society in combination with soft methods of influence – primarily by persuading opponents. We believed that such a strategy would yield a positive result", – Haiduk explains (Shcherbak, 2023b, p. 529). In the third novel, the rule of his team is defined as a "dictatorial regime of a military junta", and he himself receives the status of a tyrant. In the last novel of trilogy, the protagonist clarifies in an interview with a journalist the status of the vector of development chosen by him and his associates: "This is a mode of responsibility to the people in a period of great challenges, great turbulence and uncertainty. This is the regime that brought stability, prosperity to the country and the growth of the people's well-being, the elimination of the serfdom-oligarchic system, and a sharp reduction in corruption" (Shcherbak, 2021, p. 529). Although Haiduk is called a tyrant "out of sight", and during personal meetings they communicate submissively and flatteringly, he understands the insincere behavior of colleagues and subordinates, and knows that the time will come when he will be betrayed, like other managers. The reason for this, of course, is the desire to get the power that belongs to the Coordinator.

In the novels, the writer emphasizes the psychological influence of Haiduk on those around him. For example, the episode of the character's meeting with George Bezpaly, the son of a former colleague who became a traitor, is indicative. The boy considers Ihor to be the mastermind of his father's murder and seeks revenge, but a personal meeting changes his intentions: "But, just like then, near Vinnytsia, he felt a strange paralysis of will, as if this tyrant, who had aged since seeing him in Vinnytsia, Bezpaly had over him hypnotic power. George COULDN'T raise his hand against Haiduk. And I didn't want to" (Shcherbak, 2021, p. 218). The character's leadership qualities, his life experience, honesty combined with courage and resilience, have a convincing effect even on enemies and cause a sense of fear and respect. The society is surprised that after receiving the greatest power in the country and influence at the international level, Haiduk, who was not a public person before, "closed himself even more, did not let journalists in, did not make promises. He did not try to use events for self-advertisement or propaganda purposes, he became inconspicuous in the information space" (Shcherbak, 2021, p. 503). This happened because he clearly knows the price of gaining power, he often thinks about it, for example, his position in life changes like this: "He said goodbye forever to the naive myth about 'his team', 'his people', 'guys who can be trusted'... This is a journey of self-denial and fierce stratospheric loneliness, when no one can be trusted, when the soul is burned, as if the battlefield were with napalm" (Shcherbak, 2021, p. 182). That is, Haiduk is convinced that the main thing is not the fact of power itself, but how to use it, and most importantly, to give it up in time – this is his victory over the system. Directly, this is the Insight that comes to the character in the finale of the trilogy.

Conclusions

During the analysis of the genealogical features of Yu. Shcherbak's novels, the following genre features were singled out: the creation of the image of the character of the future, the philosophical understanding of the contemporary problems through the modeling of the future, the artistic understanding of current problems, the main driver of the plot is the "man-system" conflict, the process of human regeneration is depicted etc. This allows us to emphasize the antiutopian dominant of "The Time" trilogy, which does not deny the presence of a synthesis of features of a political novel, a cautionary novel, fiction (elements of science fiction), an adventure novel, a detective story (the novels depict battles, chases, escapes, military operations, investigations into the deaths of individual characters, etc.).

In "The Time" trilogy the main character chooses the struggle for the preservation of Ukraine in the context of geo-political changes as the purpose of his existence, and therefore decides on decisive actions and defeats the existing inefficient and hostile politicians. He often resorts to introspection, which helps him find an insight: sooner or later, power kills morally and physically. That is why Haiduk voluntarily renounces the position of State Coordinator and in the finale of the trilogy lives a simple life of a recluse together with his son, and in the future, with his beloved woman Oksana. The character once again defeats the system and its negative influence on consciousness. This is not typical for the classic character of antiutopia, who in the finale of the novel must despair and often die. So, Yu. Shcherbak proposed his own model of the character of the future – the character of a leader, a strong personality who is not afraid to take responsibility, self-actualizes and achieves the goal.

In the novels of Yu. Shcherbak, "eternal" philosophical and topical problems are understood (through the thoughts, monologues and dialogues of the main character). In the trilogy, problems traditional for antiutopia are actualized, for example: the purpose of man in the world, the influence of power on the inner world and behavior of the individual, the conflict "man-system", the motive of freedom, the meaning of religion and moral and ethical rules, etc.

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