

МАОУ «Первая университетская гимназия имени академика В.В.Сороки»

Индивидуальный конкурс эссе

**«Unity in Diversity: Russia and the English-Speaking World.
Time for Equal Opportunities»**

Исследовательская работа (эссе)

**«Фантастические романы, предсказывающие будущее:
российские и зарубежные авторы»**

«Fantasy novels that try to predict the future: Russian and foreign
authors»

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2022

The plan:

1) Introduction

A brief prologue to the topic with my contemplation about the future and its foreseeing.

2) «Leviathan Wakes» by James S.A. Corey

The summary of a famous novel created by a modern American writer: its plot, main conflicts and issues.

3) «Metro 2033» by Dmitriy Glukhovsky

A close look to a book written by a modern Russian novelist: its plot and problematics.

4) Comparison

Collating the novels according to comparison axes, finding similarities and differences.

1. Introduction

«The present is big with the future; the future could be read in the past; the distance is expressed in the near».

– Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz

It is usually stated that the history is a cycle. Indeed, people tend to live according to their past experiences and traditions and solve their problems based on historical precedents. Moreover, it is proved that culture repeats itself once in 30 years, because musicians and authors take inspiration from art which impressed them in their childhood or youth. All of the above is the reason why many people consider knowledge of the past to be the most reliable way to predict the future. I will not try to reassure them. My point is that we usually underestimate the role of the present in the process of defining the future. Sometimes people cannot even realise how precise and long-term could be the prognosis which is developed on the modern tendencies. In this essay my aim is not only to compare the authors and their novels, but to analyze the connection of their vision of the future to our reality.

2. «Leviathan Wakes» by James S.A. Corey

«Leviathan Wakes» is the first book of the series of books called «The Expanse», which received its name after the main topic of this novel – space exploration by humanity. According to the author's opinion, a unique spaceship engine that works on nuclear energy is invented, giving the opportunity to people to research other planets and asteroids and settle down on them. The actions described in the novel take place in approximately 150 years after this event. Humanity has successfully inhabited Mars, Asteroids Belt and Moons of outer planets. Planets and asteroids act in a similar way to sovereign countries existing in our world and are highly economically dependent on each other. For example, Mars as the centre of technological advances and military forces, requires a lot of mineral recourses from asteroids, but provides them with

natural products, which they are unable to grow themselves. Actually, later this system proves itself to be fragile, because each planet or asteroid has its own interests and the relations between them are potentially hostile.

The human race got divided into two subraces. The Earthlings and the Martians are usually stocky and well-built, whereas the inhabitants of Asteroids Belt, so-called Belters, are thin and tall, because their physiology has altered as a consequence of living in the artificial gravity. Such division has led to the occurrence of interplanetary racism. We can observe the examples of it throughout the whole novel. It is the first connection to the real world I would like to introduce.

The second one is that in «Leviathan Wakes» the topic of overpopulation on Earth is widely discussed. This issue in the future gets even worse, so the government of the planet has to create a special demographic policy. According to it, five couples can have only one child. In other words, a child has ten parents. Each case is special, individual. These parents have to reach an agreement on what their responsibilities in their family would be like etc. Although this may seem ridiculous and immoral to us, the main hero of this novel has actually been born in such a family and is content with it.

Moreover, I would like to highlight the said opportunity of developing technologies connected with nuclear power. Although in our reality we still have a number of prejudices towards them, the author expects this theme to be quite perspective and I fully agree with him.

«Leviathan Wakes» is an outstanding novel, which is particularly famous for its diverse world and a great number of contradictory political storylines.

3. «Metro 2033» by Dmitriy Glukhovsky

Our further topic will be one of the most well-known Russian novels of this genre – «Metro 2033», written by a journalist Dmitriy Glukhovsky. He allows us to experience and think closely about the consequences of nuclear conflicts and the life of people in such conditions.

The author imagines a probability of a nuclear war happening in the near future. Its outcome is horrible: the population of Earth decreases to a considerable extent. The planet is influenced by radiation; therefore, different aggressive mutants appear. The events described in the book take place in Moscow, the citizens of which were no longer able to survive on the surface and had to relocate and hide in the Metro, which was safe enough to live in. The residents occupied its stations, each of which later became similar to a city-state. They started adapting to the new conditions: built defense structures, started growing mushrooms and breeding domestic animals that had been miraculously saved from the surface, and created whole new political systems. In conclusion, a reader discovers a new reality, which is yet a bit familiar to us because of its people. The author describes the society in a pure humanistic manner.

The main topic that corresponds to our reality is, obviously, the existence of nuclear weapons and the threat of its usage. However, the situation that happened to the characters is incomparable to ours, Glukhovsky seems to have embodied in his novel all of our dreads of this possible situation. He intended to show us that nuclear conflicts lead only to degradation and extinction and we should preserve and value our peaceful life as long as possible.

The author vividly and in great detail tells us a story about a forced adaptation and people's lives, which are not only full of dangers and hardships, yet adventures, companionships and the belief in a better future. «Metro 2033» is loved by readers for its realistic narration and cultural familiarity, which will not leave anyone indifferent.

4. Comparison

I would like to compare both novels. First of all, the narrative style of J. Corey is quite different from Glukhovsky's one. The main focus is on society, he defines his main characters as parts of a social group, which has its rights and opportunities to influence other communities. Corey pays a lot of attention to surroundings, while the inner world of his characters gets a secondary role. Their backstory, thoughts and feelings are usually shown during their interaction and dialogues with other people. I cannot say that it is contrary to Glukhovsky, but the latter's style seems to be more classic in comparison.

The characters in both novels have to overcome a lot of challenges. However, there is an interesting detail associated with them. In «Metro 2033» people are fighting for their right to survive in the cruel world. Therefore, their main enemy is radiation – an external circumstance, the reason for monsters and mutants emerging, whereas in «Leviathan Wakes» the groups of people are confronting each other (that is where all the political storylines the book is famous for come from).

These novels have the similarity that I would like to end my essay with. As I have shown throughout my writing, each of them pays attention to significant world issues. In these books the authors express their concern, anxiety and ideas in order to raise awareness of these problems in our society and attract attention to them. As if we heard them saying: «We live together on the same planet and, unlike in such fantastic scenarios, everything can still be settled with our unity».

Appendix

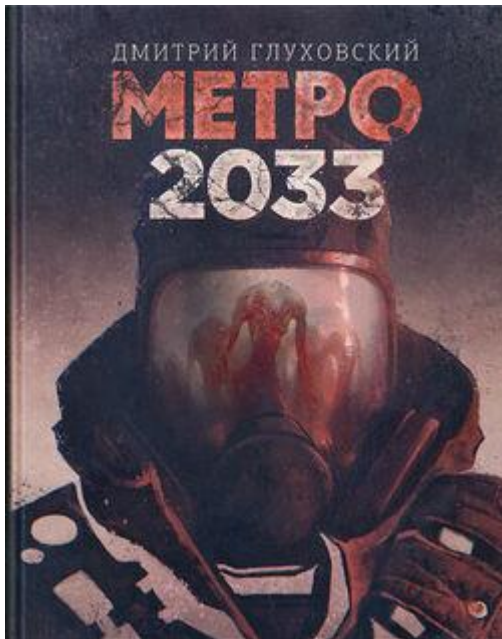
1. Footage from TV-series «The Expanse» – a TV adaptation of «Leviathan Wakes» and further books.



2. James Corey is a pen name used by two writers: Daniel Abraham and Ty Franck



3. «Metro 2033» book cover.



4. Dmitriy Glukhovsky



Bibliography

1. «Leviathan Wakes» by James S.A. Corey
2. «Metro 2033» by D.Glukhovsky