

CONFLICT OF TRADITIONAL VALUES AND MODERN REALITY IN JONATHAN FRANZEN'S NOVEL "CORRECTIONS"

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ABSTRACT

The article analyzes the novel by the contemporary American writer Jonathan Franzen. Based on the material of the novel "Amendments", the author examines how in modern American society traditional family values come into conflict with the psychology of consumption.

Keywords: Franzen, Amendments, consumer society, family values.

INTRODUCTION

Jonathan Earl Franzen is a contemporary American writer currently based in New York and a contributor to The New Yorker magazine. The novel "Amendments" immediately after its publication was officially recognized in the United States: in 2001, the author was awarded the "National Book Award".

The novel of the American writer is a modern version of the so-called "encyclopedia of American life" (social novel) combined with family chronicles. The plot of the novel reveals social features of modern life in the United States on the example of the history of the Lambert family (Alfred and Inid, their three children - Gary, Chipper, Denise - and grandchildren). Franzen's attention, as a rule, is attracted by a certain type of hero - who occupies a fairly high position in society, who has achieved professional and material success. The peculiarity of Franzen's approach to this type is manifested in the fact that the life of the heroes, developing in prosperous America, from the very beginning of the narrative is permeated with an atmosphere of fear: a fierce wind rises, evil shadows rush, an ominous image of darkness appears, the author writes: "This darkness did not just exist but devoured landmarks." In addition to the general atmosphere of fear, each of the Lambert family experiences their own fear (Alfred felt fear of rapidly advancing physical weakness; Gary was frightened by the prospect of divorce due to financial consequences; Caroline is afraid of an attack on her house). As the plot progresses, these horrific phantasmagorias intensify, but Franzen gives them a realistic explanation. The confusion of the real and the unreal in the perception of the heroes is associated with their use of psychotropic drugs - as a means of getting rid of the depression that haunts them.

Another constant feature of Franzen's heroes, in addition to being successful, is their patriotism, they love their country and are proud of it. For example, Alfred and Inid Lambert embody the patriarchal, conservative spirit of true Americans: they are characterized by real patriotism and a sincere love for America, especially for the Midwest and his native St. Jude, which tightly ties its inhabitants to itself.

For the heroes of the literature of the consumer society, the material world is of particular importance. Modern man acts as a consumer in him: he treats everything around him - to nature, to people - as a means of achieving and satisfying his needs. Moreover, a person begins

to treat himself as a thing. So Franzen Lambert turned into a thing, "the house captured both spouses", they merged with the house, became its integral part. The Lambert children do not understand the old parents' attachment to the house and are fighting with them for their parents to leave the house.

Each of the heroes of the novel turns out to be closely related, associated with something that explains the character more deeply. So, Alfred's symbol is his old blue chair, which he does not want to part with. He spends the last months of his life, sitting for long hours in an armchair, as if in a sleepy daze - as if this was no longer his real life, but only an illusion of life. For Alfred Lambert, the most important thing in life was the service of his corporation - the Midland Pacific railway company, whose interests he, sometimes at a loss to himself, stubbornly defends in the spirit of Marxism. Alfred's notions of honor and justice, from the point of view of his children (especially Gary), are outdated.

Taking into account the genre characteristics of Franzen's novel *Amendments* (a family chronicle), the theme of intergenerational relations will inevitably arise in it. In the Lambert family, the conflict between parents and children is brewing gradually: the mother of the family, Inid, who is accustomed to completely controlling the situation in the house, begins to feel anxiety that the children who have gained independence with their way of life no longer fit into its framework. Indeed, children - Gary, Chipper and Denise - are getting cramped in provincial St. Jude, and Philadelphia and New York are becoming the place of their personal realization. Young Lamberts organically fit into the rhythm of life of these large American cities. Here Franzen refers to the traditional portrayal of the American hero, for whom the place where his roots are, he calmly moves from one place to another.

The tragic outlook in Franzen's characters is shown incrementally. It is most strongly reflected in the minds of the most adult of the characters - the head of the Lambert family, who lived a long life, a frail old man suffering from Parkinson's disease. All plot lines of the novel are united by one leitmotif, emphasized in the title of the novel. The title of the novel ("*The Corrections*") has multiple meanings. First, in the literal sense, this word means error correction.

So, for example, Chip tried to amend his own script, which he began to create after leaving the university. At the same time, chip mistakenly believed that the script was not accepted for staging due to the fact that it contained an overabundance of bodily descriptions, but in reality the problem was that there were too many philosophical and theoretical monologues. Alfred's amendments are connected with the elimination of the flaws of the railway, on which he honestly worked all his life.

The nature of communication in modern American society resembles communication on a social network. Each person should create an attractive image for himself with an attractive story, be interesting to other people and not cause them negative emotions with his problems: "The modern structure of society gives a person the illusion that he is free, that he can completely reinvent himself." It turns out that we are dealing with the facades of human personalities, knowing nothing about their inner world. But in the family, this tactic does not work, all the most secret corners of our inner world are open to the family, there we appear not as we want, but as we are. Therefore, it is the description of the family with the whole complex of

relationships that is the key to the inner world of the hero in modern American reality and a means of counteracting the culture of consumption.

LITERATURE

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