

Fahrenheit 451

by Ray Bradbury

The essay for studying by Lukas

At first, there was Bradbury

An iconic book of the fourth generation of people of Earth, *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury, has evidently opened the floodgates for the creation of a whole antiutopian series where a strong freedom-loving personality changes its identification in the totalitarian society and starts to fight against it.

Maze Runner, Total Recall, The Hunger Games, Insurgent/Divergent, The Running Man, and Delirium – you must know all these books and movies that won a lot of prizes and take rightful places in the bestsellers' list year after year.

The anti-utopia by Bradbury, published in 1953, was not the first in its kind, but, nevertheless, it became a peculiar symbol of this genre. It is among the three most popular anti-utopias and every fantasy lover will name it as the book he/she has read.

It is safe to say that modern literature models of the totalitarian society are built on the three whale-books: *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury, 1984 by George Orwell, and *Brave New World* by Aldous

Huxley.

During his life, Bradbury created more than eight hundred different literary works that include some novels, hundreds of stories, dozens of plays, a series of articles, notes, and poems. The main Bradbury's accomplishment is that he managed to spark the interest of readers in the genres of science fiction and fantasy, which were at the periphery of the modern popular culture before him.

There was a legend in the Bradbury family that at the famous Salem witch trial in 1692, a great-grandmother of the writer, Mary Bradbury was burnt. This fact is not confirmed but Ray definitely believed it.

Maybe this deep connection to this legend inspired him to start a book with a rebellious quote of the Spanish Nobel prize winner Juan Ramon Jimenez: «Si os dan papel pautado, escribid por el otro lado» (If they give you ruled paper, write across).

Raybury became worldwide famous after the publication of *Fahrenheit 451* in 1953. The novel was published part by part in a newly appeared magazine *Playboy*.

In 1954 the book was awarded by the American Academy of Art and received a gold medal from the Commonwealth Club of California. In 1984 it was included to the "Hall of Fame" of the Prometheus Award, and in 2004 it won "Retro" Huge Award. Not

once the novel was screened (1966 film adaptation and 2018 film adaptation), in 1982 BBC Radio 1 released its dramatization. Bradbury himself made an adaptation of *Fahrenheit 451* for a stage play and recorded an audiobook – it was nominated to Grammy Award in 1977. He also participated in the creation of a text computer game *Fahrenheit 451*.

In 2012 Google offered to standardize a new status code of the protocol HTTP - HTTP 451 that will warn the Internet users that a requested page exists but unavailable for legal reasons. The code was approved by the Internet Engineering Steering Group in 2015 and added to the HTTP standard in 2016. In the notification about the new code, a gratitude to Ray Bradbury was expressed.

During the conference of The NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory on 22 August 2012, it was decided to name a landing place of MSL Curiosity as Bradbury Landing in honour of the fantasy writer Ray Bradbury, the author of *The Martian Chronicles*. One of the craters on Mars is also named in his honour.

Even when he became a popular writer, Bradbury continued to write, working for several hours per day.

In 1957 his book *Dandelion Wine* was published, later it was continued by *Farewell Summer*. However, the editors refused to publish the continuation appealing to the “text immaturity”. Bradbury published the second part only in 2006, half a

century after the first one.

The next Bradbury's novel, *Something Wicked This Way Comes* was published in 1962. The title was taken from *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare, a line from the fourth act told by a witch. The witch talks about a sympathy towards the evil that was awakened in *Macbeth* with the help of witches.

In 1984 Bradbury republished some of his early stories in a special collection *A Memory of Murder*, and later in 1985, he published a detective novel *Death Is a Lonely Business*.

When he was rather senior, Bradbury used to begin his morning with a manuscript of another story, believing that a new work might prolong his life.

The books were published almost every year. The last big novel saw the light in 2006, but it had received a high buyer demand even before it was published. The last story of the writer, *The Dog in the Red Bandana* was written and published in the summer of 2010.

During all his life Bradbury had been interested in science and always talked about the weak spots of humankind that could lead to the point of its self-destruction. These elements are the distinctive features of Bradbury's fantasy. The Bradbury's books are said to be always as if "between future and past" but, nevertheless, to stay "timeless".