

**РАЗДЕЛ 1. ВОЙНА И КУЛЬТУРА ПАМЯТИ  
В КУЛЬТУРОЛОГИЧЕСКИХ, ЛИНГВИСТИЧЕСКИХ,  
ИСТОРИЧЕСКИХ, ЛИТЕРАТУРОВЕДЧЕСКИХ  
ИССЛЕДОВАНИЯХ**

**SECTION 1. WAR AND CULTURE OF MEMORY  
IN CULTUROLOGICAL, LINGUISTIC, HISTORICAL,  
LITERARY STUDIES**

**BRITISH SOCIAL REALISM AND “KITCHEN SINK DRAMA”**

**БРИТАНСКИЙ СОЦИАЛЬНЫЙ РЕАЛИЗМ И  
“ДРАМАТУРГИЯ КУХОННОЙ МОЙКИ”**

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The article reveals the essence of the British cultural movement "kitchen sink realism," describes its concept and main characteristics. It also explains how the social breakdown in post-war years becomes a prerequisite to the formation of a new art style. The new approach to depict "angry young men" in cinema and literature adds another layer to the drama genre.

*Keywords:* "kitchen sink realism"; drama; social issues; working class.

В статье раскрывается сущность британского культурного движения "реализм кухонной мойки", описывается его концепция и основные характеристики. Также демонстрируется, как социальный распад в послевоенные годы становится предпосылкой формирования нового художественного стиля. Данный подход к изображению «сердитых молодых людей» по-новому раскрывает жанр драмы в кино и литературе.

*Ключевые слова:* "реализм кухонной мойки"; драма; социальные вопросы; рабочий класс.

Up to a certain time, the working class was not an object of interest for filmmakers. If it was portrayed, it was portrayed stereotypically, and until the late 1950s only members of the wealthy classes received any kind of attention in British cinema. And the life of «blue-collar» workers carried away more advanced playwrights: plays about the lives of workers were staged with success at the Royal National Theatre.

The complex process of social breakdown in post-war and post-imperial Britain was consistently ignored. The state attitude was reflected in the

infamous 1937 statement of the president of the British Film Censorship Board: "We can be proud that not a single film is shown in London that reflects the pressing issues of the day. Unflattering epithets have fastened for British films – "escapist, conservative, servile, sluggish, limited, didactic". Francois Truffaut, the French filmmaker, seriously wondered, "Is there not a certain incompatibility between 'cinema' and 'Britain'? While in France cinema was one of the most attractive creative fields, in England ambitious young people preferred to conquer the traditionally strong theater. And the British New Wave was to change that [1].

So, a new creative movement emerged in England. It got the name of "kitchen sink realism," reflecting the unenviable existence of the common man. Actually, this term describes a group of British masters of the realistic movement of the 1950s, who developed themes of everyday life – in other words, the social realism of the British scenario. The spirit of this artistic movement echoed the ideas of the literary movement "Angry Young Men", with the theme of protest of young working class people against the realities in Britain in the 1950s.

Why the sink? The phrase "kitchen sink" was first coined by David Sylvester in a 1954 article "Kitchen sink realism" describing the works of John Bretby, Derrick Greaves, Edward Middleditch and Jack Smith. All the artists studied at the Royal College of Art in London and became known for belonging to the city's gallery, the Fine Art Quartet.

The artists' primary subjects were the objects around them, from kitchen sinks and tables to closets and backyards. Views of interiors and still lifes of simple objects express the triviality of everyday life, the way of life of the working class. Their attention to the everyday sphere echoes the search for existentialism. Kitchen junk or toilet interiors speak of the meaninglessness of life, of the general dejection of post-war society.

The English artist John Bretby suddenly began to paint proletarians in T-shirts, their tired wives, shabby dogs, pale children, and their places of residence: cheap rented apartments with shabby kitchens, rusty bathrooms, and leaky toilets. He could even paint a picture devoted only to the sink. The art historian John Burger, whose marxist beliefs echoed to this style of painting, wrote enthusiastically about Bretby: "He paints a bag of cornflakes on a littered kitchen table as if it were part of the Last Supper."

Kitchen sink realism is only one strand of social realism. And while the British New Wave has to do with the work of British filmmakers, and the Angry Young Men movement has to do with literature and theater, kitchen sink dramaturgy is characteristic of all of these art forms [2].

The action films and plays of this style usually show us poorer, industrial areas, usually in the industrial Northern counties of Britain, and use accents

and slang found in those regions. The innovation of the dramaturgy of the "angry men" was that a new type of character was brought to the forefront: a man with "a strong jaw and powerful knees" – a suddenly agitated man of those who had not previously been seen to be particularly prone to reflection.

For example, look at John Osborne's play "Look Back in Anger", which received a screen adaptation in the late 1950s. "The action takes place in the Porters' one-room apartment. Middle England. Our time." – Osborne describes the setting of his play. After that we are treated to a more detailed description of the setting: "worn leather armchairs", "shabby stuffed animals", a gas stove (probably not working properly or with a gas debt), in short, all the details of the modest second-hand furnishings of working-class tenants. We can see all these items of the house in Tony Richardson's 1959 film adaptation. One might also note that very sink, dirty, full of dishes, which is an integral part of the furnishings.

The main character, Jimmy Porter, an intellectual who has a temper and cannot control his hatred, terrorizes his wife with constant scandals and taunts, and then has an affair with her girlfriend. In the background of the plot, the drama of Porter's personality unfolds. He is an uncontrollable boor who is difficult to justify, but through him we see the reflection of society's need to sharply criticize all the faults in English society in the 1950s and its social and political flaws.

The characters of "angry men" are not "little people" at all, not daring to raise their voices against the system. Jimmy Porter of Look Back in Anger and his company do nothing but shout, yell, scream, and protest against everything from the government to his wife. It's a perpetual rebellion, meaningful but utterly merciless, with wives suffering most: the situation in which Porter drives his unrequited spouse balances on the edge of domestic violence.

What do these works and all others that can be classified as "kitchen sink" have in common is the prominent figure of "the angry young man"? This character archetype is not only angry but bitterly disillusioned with life. Whether desperate for a raise at work or for respect from loved ones and peers, what the "angry young man" craves most of all is radical change [3].

The writers depicted life at the bottom of society realistically and dispassionately, but precisely - dispassionately, not seeking to squeeze out tears of sympathy for the plight. Moreover, difficult conditions of life are not the grounds for despondency in their novels and plays. The basis is despondency itself, spiritual impoverishment, intellectual apathy, a lack of desire to leap forward and grow above oneself, a lack of purpose in life, finally.

The "angry" writers hit the mark. Society wanted to know about the problems of the unprivileged. Almost all of the landmark plays written at the time were screened, and the films won enormous popularity. Leading roles in screen productions of «Look Back in Anger» (1959) and «Saturday Night and Sunday Morning» (1960) paved the way to big cinema for Richard Burton and Albert Finney.

Epoch-making films with sharp social problems followed one after another: *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner* (1962), *That's the Sporting Life* (1963), *Darling* (1965). There were directors who filmed fundamentally working-class life or those stubbornly trying to get out of it: Tony Richardson, John Schlesinger, Karel Reisch and Lindsay Anderson. It was still the same "angry" crude cinema with unrefined language and unkind characters in checkered shirts, addressing sometimes the issue of crime. It was not a generational manifesto, but a social one: the poor, the poor are talking to you.

The play "A Taste of Honey" stands out in the "angry" men's art. It was written by 18-year-old Shelagh Delaney in 10 days, and it is so good that it is still on stage. In 1961 Richardson made a film adaptation of it. Joe Delaney's young heroine who lives with her alcoholic mother, also rebels against the social order – and much bolder than men: she has an affair with a black sailor and decides to have a child with him, with a gay friend to help her. What is clear is that for the 50's England, this clearly did not fit into the traditional pattern. Joe bravely faces reality without averting his eyes, and the "grumpiness" goes away. An alcoholic mother takes on human features, a sailor becomes a "prince from Africa," and "kitchen-sink realism" turns on its poetic side, without funereal intonations [4].

These plays, films, and novels can now be considered the immediate ancestors of popular British television series such as *Coronation Street*, *Eastenders*, and *Derry Girls*. Even the highly successful 2021 film *Belfast*, directed by Kenneth Branagh, contains elements of the genre's social and political tensions between blue-collar characters. Through these new forms of media, kitchen sink realism lives on, long after the first round of stage-prop kitchen sinks have been packed up and put away.

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## **ДЕМИФОЛОГИЗАЦИЯ ОБРАЗА “ТЕМНОВЕКОВЬЯ” В РОМАНЕ К. ФОЛЛЕТТА “СТОЛПЫ ЗЕМЛИ”**

### **DEMYTHOLOGIZING THE IMAGE OF THE "DARK AGES" IN THE K. FOLLETT'S NOVEL "THE PILLARS OF THE EARTH"**

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В статье на примере романа Кена Фоллетта “Столпы земли” подробно изучается термин “Темновековье”, его точность и правдивость. Делается акцент на положительные моменты средневековья и ставится под сомнение правильность термина “Темновековья” в употреблении его по отношению к эпохе Средних веков.

*Ключевые слова:* роман; история; Средние века; “Темновековье”; миф.

The article examines in detail the term “Dark Ages” on the example of Ken Follett's novel “The Pillars of the Earth”, its accuracy and truthfulness. The emphasis is placed on the positive aspects of the Middle Ages and the correctness of the term “Dark Ages” in its use in relation to the era of the Middle Ages is questioned.

*Keywords:* novel; history; The Middle Ages; “Dark Ages”, myth.

“Первыми к месту казни сбежались мальчишки...” [1, с. 9]. Именно так начинается произведение английского автора Кена Фоллетта “Столпы земли”. Анархия, узурпация, власть, жестокость, любовь, судьба... И это только малая часть мотивов романа, в котором описывается один из наиболее тяжёлых периодов в средневековой истории Англии, обремененной гражданскими войнами между претендентами на престол, разорением, неурожаем и голодом в начале XII века. Такие реаллии позволяют историкам использовать термин «темные века», первое употребление которого приписывается Петрарке. Термин употребляется по отношению к раннему средневековью, но часто распространяется на весь период Средневековья, особенно в связи с интенцией противопоставить Средневековье Возрождению, и в таких случаях часто заменяется на метафорическое “темновековье”. Целью нашей статьи является рассмотрение мифологизированного Средневековья в современном историческом романе на материале романа К. Фоллетта «Столпы земли».