

# ЛІНГВОПОЕТИКА ТА ІНТЕРПРЕТАЦІЯ ЛІТЕРАТУРНО-ХУДОЖНЬОГО ТВОРУ

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## THE EVOLUTION OF THE HORROR GENRE IN FEATURE FICTION

By the end of the XVIIIth century, during the summing up of the the Age of Enlightenment and the assessment of its achievements, first of all, the revolutions in America and Europe and the creation of the USA, a new democratic state, the question naturally arose in the minds of people, why social and technical progress, which so obviously improved the conditions of human existence, did not lead to moral progress, did not improve, as it was promised, human nature. Doubts about the omnipotence of the mind settled in people, and at the same time there was a need to take a closer look at the movements of the human soul [1].

Since that moment, a significant number of works forming and popularizing the tradition of mystical literature appeared. From 1762 to the 1850s, about six hundred of ‘Gothic’ works were published, written by both famous and unknown writers.

In the XXth century, a separate genre ‘horror fiction’ or ‘horror’ separated from the Gothic genre. H.F. Lovecraft is considered to be the founder of the genre, he filled his works with monsters, zombies and demons that terrified the reader.

During the 1950s in England, Daphne Du Maurier, whose works in the Gothic novel genre (a collection of short stories *The Apple Tree*, *Kiss Me Again*, *Stranger* and *Birds*, her story with elements of both the horror genre and zoological fiction (1952). D. Du Maurier became popular thanks to her gothic novel *Rebecca* (1938) and had a significant influence on such contemporary novelists as S. King and S. Mayer.

In the sixties, the situation began to change dramatically. The changes in the life society, especially in the USA, provided rich material for horror novels. Hubert Selby Jr.’s book *Last Exit to Brooklyn* (1964) first described a terrifying twist of life, when all kinds of scum of society lived and killed each other in the neighborhood of fashionable apartments of a huge metropolis, which involuntarily suggests the real, not fictional, existence of evil demonic forces [2].

The sixties are also marked with the heyday of Shirley Hardie Jackson’s creativity, who was recognized as one of the most talented writers

of the psychological horror genre. Her works had real magic. Her second collection of short stories *The Lottery* and the story with the same title, which described the cruel occult traditions in a village, attracted general attention. The gothic thriller *The Hangsman*, *The Bird's Nest*, which tell about the destruction of the personality, and *The Sundial*, which tells about strange people waiting for the end of the world in an old castle also gained wide popularity. The novel *The Haunting of Hill House* impressed S. King and he took it as a model for *The Shining*. *The Bird's Nest*, *Hangsman*, and *The Sundial* are considered by S. King and other writers to be a few of the most important horror novels of the twentieth century.

Ira Levin's novel *Rosemary's Baby* (1967) became a real event in the history of the «horror» genre of the 60s. Now *Rosemary's Baby* is quite rightly considered a classic of the genre. This is, for example, what the famous novelist Truman Capote wrote about this book, «A darkly brilliant tale of modern devilry that induces the reader to believe the unbelievable. I believed it and was altogether enthralled» [3].

The 1970s – 80s appeared to be a fruitful period for lots of authors of the horror fiction. We should mention William Peter Blatty and his *The Exorcist*, that resulted in the emergence of the army of followers. Then S. King published *Carrie* (1974) and won leading positions in the horror genre. Robert R. McCammon's excellent novel *Usher's Passing* (1984) is a good example in which all the most common archetypes of the genre are used. They are a curse, and elements of vampirism, and shapeshifters, and devilish possession, and even a house of ghosts, which an old abandoned castle turns into.

In the next 10-15 years, under the influence of new authors, the genre of the horror novel expanded its aesthetic boundaries. Clive Barker's *Books of Blood* (1984), John Skipp and Craig Spector's *The Light at the End* (1986) changed the logic of the 'fan culture' created by H. Lovecraft dramatically. Now, frank description of violence scenes, which were previously classified as trash from the point of view of high taste, began to be depicted in the elite culture style, that is, in a beautifully polished figurative language that includes bright elements of black humor [2].

It caused endless heated disputes between the representatives of the so-called classical, or calm, horror and the representatives of the restless, or crazy, horror. V. Glakov thinks that S. King's influence is definitely seen in Barker's style but he lacks psychologism that's why the evil in his works often looks more irrational and naturalistic than it is necessary to achieve the necessary effect. At the same time, S. King considered C. Barker "the future of the horror genre" because of author's excellent technique and virtuosity of style.

Thus, in the 20th century, a genre of horror fiction or horror that separated from the Gothic genre. Nowadays, Stephen King is considered the master of horror. Among other world-famous horror writers there are Clive

Barker, William Blatty, Ira Levine, Robert McCammon, Stephen King, and many others. The awareness of the fundamental features of the tradition of horror fiction is necessary to carry out an analysis of such texts to ensure the preservation of the artistic and aesthetic effects of the work in the practice of literary translation.

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