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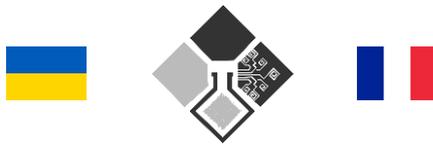
PROCEEDINGS OF THE
VII INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC
AND THEORETICAL CONFERENCE

MODERN VISION
OF IMPLEMENTING
INNOVATIONS IN
SCIENTIFIC STUDIES

06.02.2026

MARSEILLE
FRENCH REPUBLIC

 **SCIENTIA**
COLLECTION OF SCIENTIFIC PAPERS



Non-governmental Organization
International Center of Scientific Research

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COLLECTION OF SCIENTIFIC PAPERS

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SECTION 22.

CULTURE AND ART

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EXISTENTIAL DIMENSIONS OF KEN KEASEY'S CREATIVE WORK: A DIALOGUE OF LITERATURE AND FILMMAKER (TO THE 90TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AUTHOR'S BIRTH)

Modern literary discourse continues to actively rethink the legacy of American literature of the second half of the 20th century, where the figure of Kenneth Elton Kesey occupies a special place. His work became a landmark for the era of beatniks and hippies, and the 90th anniversary of the writer's birth, together with the 50th anniversary of the release of Milos Forman's cult film, actualize the need for a deeper analysis of his key ideas. To understand the genesis of K. Kesey's work, it is important to move away from the simplified perception of him as exclusively a representative of the counterculture or informal movement. Despite his external shockingness and persistent association with the psychedelic revolution, Kesey had a solid academic education, in particular a degree from Stanford University, so his literary protest was not a spontaneous rebellion, but the result of deep intellectual tension.

Researchers draw parallels between Kesey's biographical traumas and the experience of other artists of the time, noting that a collision with death or social catastrophes often becomes a catalyst for the creative process. The writer absorbed

the ideas of the beatniks, transforming them through the prism of his own tragic worldview, where the fight against the "dragons" of the system often leads to an inevitable encounter with them in oneself. The central conflict of the author's most famous novel, "*One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*" is the confrontation between the individual and the "Combine" - a metaphorical image of a mechanistic civilization.

In the second half of the 20th century, the main social fear shifted from the plane of physical survival to the plane of loss of identity due to excessive control. The system, personified in the text by Nurse Ratched, offers society a model of behavior based on strict adherence to rules: following established algorithms guarantees safety, but makes happiness impossible. The tragedy lies in the fact that society voluntarily delegates responsibility for its life to external institutions, considering itself incapable of independent existence. Thus, the idea of the insane asylum in Kesey appears not as a description of a clinical institution, but as an allegory of a world where people consciously give up their freedom in exchange for imaginary stability. An important aspect of studying Kesey's legacy is the comparative analysis of the original text and its film adaptation. Despite the fact that Milos Forman's film has become an independent cultural phenomenon and a masterpiece of cinematography, there are significant differences between it and the original source, primarily in focalization. In the book, the narrative is told from the perspective of an Indian (Chief Bromden), which allows for a deeper exploration of the theme of the displacement of indigenous cultures and the metaphysical aspect of the "Combine", while the film shifts the emphasis to the external action and charismatic struggle of McMurphy.

The cinematic version, created by a director with experience of living under totalitarianism, focuses on institutional pressure, while the book explores the existential abyss into which a person falls, even with external freedom. The literary text also reveals in more detail the mechanics of manipulation, when the system uses people's weaknesses and their revelations during group therapy as a tool for mutual control. Kesey's work deconstructs the myth of the "American Dream", demonstrating that material well-being and the presence of democratic institutions do not guarantee internal freedom. Freedom in the writer's interpretation is not just an escape from restrictions, but the ability to take full responsibility for one's life. McMurphy, despite his role as a trickster, proves that simple resistance is not enough, and the real victory over the system lies not in the destruction of its external attributes, but in preserving the inner core and attempting to act. Analysis of Kesey's work allows us to conclude that the system is not interested in "ideal" people; it needs individuals with flaws that are easy to manage.

Therefore, true freedom remains a difficult internal choice that requires the individual to have the courage not to turn into "biomass", but to consciously build their own destiny even in conditions of global uncertainty.

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