

FOLKLORE MOTIFS AND MYTHOLOGY IN THE WORKS OF J.R.R. TOLKIEN AND J.ROWLING

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ABSTRACT

Introduction and Purpose: The article highlights the main purpose of works written in the fantasy genre in children's literature and the influence of this genre on children's critical thinking. In the works of J. R. R. Tolkien and J. K. Rowling, who are representatives of the fantasy genre of this period, there are also motifs from myths and fairy tales. The study also reflects the appeal of J. R. R. Tolkien and Rowling to the fantasy genre in their works, the attitude of outstanding writers towards it and the moments associated with the creativity of writers. Fantasy is such a genre that much can be said about it, neither analysis nor criticism. Fantasy, which is not only literature, but a phenomenon of modern culture as a whole, originates from myths, fairy tales, heroic epics, knightly and adventure novels, synthesizes its various features and turns them into a bearer of new qualities in one genre.

Materials and Methods: At the same time, in the Harry Potter series of novels, the study specifically noted Rowling's use of ancient Indian and Greek oral traditions. This shows that the writer penetrated deeply into oral folk literature. Why do children like to read works written in the fantasy genre? Because the heroes of works written in this genre are not afraid of anything, they put themselves in danger and win. Such children are brave and courageous. The magical world, the allure of magic, momentarily takes readers away from the real world, and for a moment they put themselves in the place of those heroes. The fact that the works of these two writers have attracted a large number of readers and are loved by children and teenagers is precisely the film adaptation of works written in this genre.

Discussion and Conclusion: In conclusion, films based on the works of J. R. R. Tolkien and Rowling have increased children's interest in reading these works. Although Rowling had not visited India, she was familiar with the literary language and mythology of India from Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone. In this work, she even created an artistic embodiment of Eastern and Indian life.

Key Words: Fantasy, Genre, Literature, Myths.

INTRODUCTION

Notwithstanding enough research has been devoted to the phenomenon of fantasy in children's literature, some aspects of its theoretical as well as historical and literary problems have not yet been scientifically resolved. In order to define the peculiarities of children's fantasy, it is necessary to focus on the connection of texts of works written in the fantasy genre with mythology, folklore, especially magical and literary fairy tales, and scientific fiction.

The study "Children's Fantasy" by English literary critic F. J. Molson examined the features of children's fantasy as a literary genre on the basis of English children's fiction.

The main purpose of a work written in the genre of fantasy in children's literature is to call upon the imagination, thinking and critical reasoning of children in some way and to inspire them to a deeper understanding of the world. This goal was also mentioned by J. R. R. Tolkien in his works written in the fantasy genre, using ancient literary motifs, images and symbols in the texts of his works, he created the embodiment of ideas and thoughts aimed at solving global philosophical problems.

The fantasy genre plays a particular role in modern mass literature written and composed for children in the second half of the XX century and in the second decade of the XXI century in the audience of children's readers. Consideration of the influence of mytho-fairytale or folklore plots and images in the works of J. R. R. Tolkien and J. Rowling, which we have taken as the object of our study, provides a basis for a clearer understanding of the characteristic features of the work of the writers we have mentioned. On the other hand, it serves for a clear and correct understanding of the works of both authors, which have attracted attention as a new stage of children's literature.

Russian researcher V. V. Gromova in her study "The Popularity Phenomenon of the Fantasy Genre in Modern Mass Literature for Children" presented a study of reader demand for works written in the fantasy genre among schoolchildren. (Gromova, 2012) She referred to Russian scientist N. I. Vasileva's research work entitled "Folklore Archetypes in Modern Mass Literature: J.K. Rowling and their Interpretation to a Foreign Culture", who noted that "*a new stage in the development of children's literature has begun with J. Rowling's 'Harry Potter' series of novels.*" (Gromova, 2012).

However, for some reason the researcher V. V. Gromova does not mention the important merits of J. J. R. Tolkien at the beginning of a new stage before J.K. Rowling. In fact, it speaks of the beginning of a new stage in the development of English children's literature, because J. R. R. Tolkien's works written in the fantasy genre still remain masterpieces for children's audience.

J.K. Rowling's works, in particular the first book of the world-famous Harry Potter series of novels, were first published in June 1997. In the same year, the novel Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone won the British Book Award "Children's Book of the Year". Already in the first chapter of the novel we find motifs of mythology and folklore. This gives reason to conclude that the writer deeply penetrated oral folk literature and benefited from it.

In Russian literature, the "Harry Potter" series of novels about is also called the Potterian books. Numerous studies carried out create a certain idea that the Russian children's literary world is based on the translation of this series of novels into Russian.

J.K. Rowling has largely capitalised on ancient Indian and Greek oral traditions in the Potterian and has created artistic representations of the events, ideas and thoughts of the Potterian in her books.

Hermione Granger, the protagonist of the series of novel and one of the classmates of Harry Potter and Ron Weasley, is named after Greek mythology and is apparently a connoisseur or patron saint of magic at the highest level. In Greek mythology, Hermione Granger is depicted as the only child of Menelaus, King of Sparta, and Helen of Troy, known for her beauty. However, the image of Hermione mentioned by J. Rowling is also found in *The Winter's Tale* by English playwright and poet William Shakespeare, but the author herself admitted that there is nothing in common between the character she created and William Shakespeare's character. Patricia Hahnemann discussed the parallels between Greek mythology and the Harry Potter novels and attempted to create a scholarly picture of J. Rowling's judgements and interpretations of her familiarity with the myths. (Hahnemann, 2021).

Epic novels, which occupy a special place in Greek folk art, were polished and created by aedea singers based on myths and folk songs, fairy tales, epics, and novels. Homer, the world-famous blind Greek poet and the first master of ancient Greek literature, is said to have been a famous aedea himself. His epics "The Iliad" and "The Odyssey" have been handed down from generation to generation for centuries, which allows us to say that they represent a large and rich collection of works of art not only of Homer, but also of the history of thought of the Greek people.

The late literary critic, Professor Akbar Aghayev wrote: *"The Iliad" describes the Trojan War; "The Odyssey" depicts the period after the war ... He (Homer) addressed historical events, used the materials of historical events enriched with myths in his epic made it the basis of artistic thought, gave it poetic scope"* (Aghayev, 1986).

Akbar Aghayev, who wrote that the series of Troy, which is one of the important series of the rich Greek mythology, is skilfully used in the epics "The Iliad" and "The Odyssey", pointed out that the plots of the above-mentioned poems are built on the basis of mythological materials and elements. In his research the author stated the general conclusion as follows: *"A number of events are widely reflected in epics, while some events are only mentioned or hinted at Therefore, all events and details in epics may not be clear for a modern reader; even in some cases it is necessary to look at myths related to that event and details"* (Aghayev, 1986).

A number of researchers doubted the identity of Homer and even denied that he was a historical figure. In 1795 and 1837, German scholars F. Wolf and C. Laxman argued that the epics "The Iliad" and "The Odyssey" are samples of folk art, and the main reason for this was the lack of biographical information about Homer. The mentioned scholars tried to prove the idea that these epics were composed by individual aedea (musicians). (Kuhn, 1957).

In the modern science of philology, the epics "The Iliad" and "The Odyssey", despite all such attempts, all unequivocally recognised Homer as the creator of these works.

When J. K. Rowling began writing Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, the first novel in the Harry Potter series, in 1990, "The Chronicles of Narnia" by Clive Lewis (1950-1955), trilogy "The Lord of the Rings" by John Ronald Tolkien (1954-1955), novels "The Hilltoppers" (1972) and "Shardik" (1974) by Richard Adams (1920-2016) were published in English children's literature and won the love and affection of readers of all ages.

J. K. Rowling was able to publish her novel "Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone" in 1997, which she started writing back in 1990, to be exact, many publishers refused to print this novel. However, the literary representative of Bloomsbury Publishing approached the

author of the novel and gave a favourable opinion to publish the work. Thus, the first book of the series of novel "Potterian" became a bestseller in Great Britain and many countries of the world as a fantasy novel, "living" under the influence and motifs of Greek mythology. The novel became one of the most widely read works of the developing stage of children's literature.

Russian scientist P. V. Korolkova, speaking about the phenomenon of popularity of novels written in the fantasy genre, concluded that the genre features of such novels play an outstanding role. The scientist tried to identify the characteristic features of both genres expressing her attitude to the boundary between fantasy and literary fairy tale. Based on such a comparative approach, P. V. Korolkova presented her judgement on the fantasy genre as follows: *"Fantasy is a 'fantasy' of 'heroic' fiction or 'sword and sorcery'. In other words, fantasy is embodied in both fantasy and scientific fiction..."* (Korolkova, 2011).

Turning to reader's interest, we would like to say that it is possible to determine why children like works written in the fantasy genre with the help of the following answers: Because the heroes of these works are not afraid of anything, they expose themselves to danger and win. Or children also want to be heroes, such children are very brave and courageous.

In the eyes of today's children, the scenes of magic and enchantment or plot created by scriptwriters draw them into their magic and away from the real life they live. They become imaginary inhabitants of a new world, even in some of their actions they live out the desire to create a new type of these scenes. Young readers evaluate the actions and characteristics of the characters they read about, and for a moment put themselves in their shoes. The great interest of both children and adolescents in the extraordinary, charming life and adventures that dazzle with bright colours encourages them to imitate the heroes of the works they read.

Among the novels written in the fantasy genre, Joanne Rowling's film adaptations of works written in this genre have an outstanding role in gaining readership among children and teenagers. In the field of children's literature, films based on the plots of works by J. R. R. Tolkien and J. K. Rowling play an exceptional role in increasing children's interest in reading these works.

In J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, part of the Harry Potter series of novels, it is revealed that the Harry Potter reader not only understands the language of snakes, but also "speaks the language of snakes." It later becomes clear that the anger-burning wizard Voldemort is not behind Harry Potter, he is also a skilled snake language expert. It turns out that Salazar Slytherin, the founder of one of the four colleges at Hogwarts, is also fluent in the snake language. Thus, from the series of novels of the writer, we can say that the author is familiar with the literary language and mythology not only of the Greeks, but also of the ancient Indians. It should be noted that Rudyard Kipling, first awarded the Nobel Prize in English-language literature (in 1907), also created an artistic picture of the mysterious and magical, marvellous world and mythology of India both in his life and work as a famous children's writer. However, although J. Rowling has never been in India, she became intimately acquainted with a number of mythological images of Indians in the work we have mentioned, as in Rudyard Kipling's fairy tales, and created an artistic embodiment of East Indian life in the novel.

In the preface to the book "Fairy Tales" translated by the late poet and translator Mikayil Rzagaluzada from the series "World Literature" of the famous Danish writer and storyteller Hans Christian Andersen (1805-1875) of the XIX century we read: *"The lively colloquial language, bold colouring of the narrator, compact storyline, poetic unity of fantasy and real life, and unusual inspiration of the writer-storyteller have opened new avenues for beautiful translations of H. C. Andersen's fairy tales"* (Khalilli, 2004).

In the kingdom of fairy tales of the world, the magical type of fairy tale, the enchantment of which became an unforgettable rich spiritual wealth of the history of people's lives, was created at the end of the XVII century, but the translation of the "Tale of One Thousand and One Nights" of the Eastern - Arabian world into the languages of Western European peoples later gained popularity in the development of such a new genre as literary fairy tales. Among such famous storytellers, undoubtedly the tales of H.C. Andersen have not escaped J. Rowling's creativity. We see that Harry Potter is also able to speak the language of the mermaid, as in the magical tale "The Little Mermaid" by H. C. Andersen.

In the fourth book entitled "Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire" which include to "Harry Potter" series of novel, the author describes wizard Harry Potter's fourth year at Hogwarts, the school of witchcraft and wizardry. Harry Potter is mysteriously forced to participate in the Tournament of the Three Wizards.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

By the way, we should note one point that this novel was awarded the biggest prize - the Hugo Award among the works included in the series of novels "Harry Potter".

It is stated in a letter sent to Harry Potter, who is spending his summer holidays at the Dursley family mansion, that he has been invited to the final round of the World Championships. In the last of the three challenges, the contestants have to find the three wizarding goblets by overcoming difficult obstacles. The winner of the tournament could be considered the first to touch the goblet. In the final stage of the challenges, Cedric and Harry Potter reach the cup at the same time and simultaneously decide to take the goblet. However, they both roll into the graveyard while touching the goblet. They come face to face with the gardener Lord Voldemort in the graveyard. Voldemort cannot fulfil his wish to kill Harry Potter in a duel. However, he is able to deliver his dead friend Cedric to Hogwarts with the help of a magical goblet. However, one of the moments that draw the reader's attention in the novel is that Harry Potter, who is deeply familiar with the mysteries of magic, speaks to the mermaids in their own language when he gets into difficult challenges, especially in the depths of the lake. A similar moment is reflected in Hans Christian Andersen's magical fairy tale "The Little Mermaid". We should not forget what a great role this extraordinary children's writer played in the development of children's literature and the special significance and influence of his literary heritage on the new stage of English children's prose. Although Azerbaijani children's writer Solmaz Amanova was not awarded the Hans Christian Andersen Prize, one of the world's most prestigious literary prizes established for the best children's works, in 2022, she was included to the list of International Children's Book Council. Azerbaijani children's poet Gasham Isabaili was awarded the Andersen Diploma of Honour by the International Children's Book Council for his fairy tale "Demon" in 2014.

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