

Mythonymy in English Folk Tale

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Annotation: The article discusses some features of the use of mythonyms in English fairy tales, taking into account the etymology, are discussed in the article.

Keywords: mythonym, fairy tale, etymology, folk

The mythonymy of the English fairy tale is one of the brightest sectors of the onomastic space. It includes proper names, denoting objects created by the imagination of people. During the analysis of the texts of English folk tales, onyms were identified that reflect both pagan and Christian views of the English people. Without exception, all the acting heroes of fairy tales (denoted by mythonyms) belong to the area of lower mythology. In some cases, the choice of a name for a mythological character is motivated by context: the brownies get names identical to the screams they make (... and one night the Hobyahs came and said, "Hobyah! Hobyah! Hobyah!"); the goblin is named the Cow Werewolf for his habit of taking the form of a domestic cow and forcing the milkmaids to run after him in the meadow.

Thus, the onomasticon of an English folk tale contains groups of mythonyms denoting brownies and goblins (Hedley Kow, the Cauld Lad of Hilton,); elves and pixies (Habetrot, Scantlie Mab); giants (Grumbo, Cormoran); dragons (the Lambton Worm, Knucker); wandering lights (Will-o'-tha-Wyke); mermaids (Madgy Figgy). Descriptive naming is more characteristic for the mythonymy of the English fairy tale: Tiddy Mun, Redcap, Yallery Brown, Green Ladies, accumulating in their semantics features of appearance or other distinctive features of a mythological character, which is one of the evidence of a taboo that existed in antiquity to personal names.

On rare occasions, supernatural characters have an individual name: Tom Tit Tot, Habetrot, Robin, Galligantua. However, a deeper etymological analysis allows us to identify the characteristic that originally underlies the naming. For example, name Scantlie Mab is a dialectal naming convention for a small child; Ettin is a common noun synonymous with the lexical unit giant; proper names Habetrot and Tom Tit Tot carry the trot / tot element in their structure, which determines their affiliation with the patrons of spinning. Consequently, the individual names of such characters are nothing more than a peripheral naming with an erased inner form. The analysis of folklore texts makes it possible to identify mythological representations that have had a certain influence on the ways of nominating characters. Thus, the creatures Habetrot and Tom Tit Tot mentioned above are functionally correlated with the pagan gods - patrons of arts and crafts, although they are characterized by a reduced status.

The mythonyms of the English folk tale accumulate in their semantics the ancient people's belief in the animality of the surrounding world and fear of the uncontrollable forces of the elements. Mythological characters are the embodiment of the powerful forces of nature: the water element, which affects the harvest and, consequently, the life and well-being of man (Tiddy Mun, The Knucker of Lyminster - nicor dragon; water monster); flora (Green Ladies); thunder, storm, air element (Thunderdell - Thunor, Thonar - cf. Thor; Ettin - cf. Scand. Jotunn).

The emergence of a number of mythological creatures in the folk tale is due to the influence of the Christian religion. The most numerous in the fairytale tradition of naming the devil (Old Man, Old Nicky, the Fiend,

Old Nick, the Devil, Owd Chap). Mythonyms are euphemistic designations of a creature, built on a single principle, namely: an attributive adjunct old + an onym or an appellative. The nouns man and chap give the naming a diminished familiar character, reducing the line to the level of an old acquaintance, friend. The Nick / Nicky component in the Old Nick / Old Nicky composite correlates in etymological dictionaries with the personal name Nicholas, although the reason for using this proper name in the devil's name is not mentioned. According to S.A. Pitina the second element in Old Nick has parallels in the German language, denoting the Germanic spirits of evil [С.А. ПИТИНА 2002: 154]. As evidence, the researcher cites the German noun Nickel with the meaning "water; (evil) gnome; evil spirit". In more rare cases, mythonim gets the originally inherent name Lucifer ("the fallen angel of Light"), Beelzebub ("Lord of Flies"). Mythonyms, denoting goblins and house spirits, are variously represented by the tale. As a rule, a generic common noun in the corresponding function (the Bogey-Beast, Bogie, Brownie) is sufficient to identify them. In some cases, the appeal may be accompanied by a toponym that limits the creature's area of residence (the Cauld Lad of Hilton, The Bargest of Grassington).

The author of tale uses, as a rule, descriptive combinations (Green Ladies, Small People, the Bad Fairies, the Good Folk), specifying the features of their appearance, disposition and habitat as a name for elves, fairies and pixies. The mythonym of Green Ladies denotes tree fairies living inside tall trees on a sacred hill and reflects the well-developed cult of tree worship among the ancient Celtic and Germanic tribes. The life of the tree fairies is inextricably linked to their chosen plants. Cutting down trees favored by fairies inevitably leads to the death of the supernatural beings themselves. In this case, however, punishment awaits the guilty person, who is punishable by death: Then the murdered tree fell down, down on top of him and killed him.

This study examines the structural features of the proper names of characters belonging to the most ancient system of folk ideas about the universe. Onyms selected from four collections of English folk tales, classified according to the characteristics of the appearance, habitat, habits and kind of activity of mythological characters. Separate proper names, according to researchers of English folklore (K. Briggs, E. Gillian, J. Simpson, S. Roud), occupy an intermediate position between different groups of mythonyms (the Cauld Lad of Hilton) or can belong to more than one group of mythonyms (Puck).

The widespread use of euphemistic proper names, which serve as a means of nominating both faeries and other mythological characters, is due to the belief of the English people that calling supernatural beings their real names will lead to imminent disaster. The ban on the use of personal names also leads to the emergence of mythonyms, which are based on the generic name: the Elfin, Elves.

The etymology of the personal names of giants in some cases reflects both elements of common Germanic beliefs (the first component of the Thunderdell composite is etymologically associated with the names of the ancient Germanic gods Thor and Thunor, or Thonar), and traces of Scandinavian influence, representing elements of Scandinavian beliefs (onimized the common noun Ettin correlates with the lexeme Jötunn, which in Scandinavian mythology is the name of giants). An analysis of the mythonyms of this group gives reason to say that the names of giants are the most important means of their individualization and are most directly related to the mythological ideas of people about the world and the forces of nature beyond the control of ancient man. Their semantics characterizes the appearance, behavior, habits, temperament of these fairy-tale heroes. The names of the wandering lights are common nouns by their origin. The text material contains several dialect variants: Jack-with-the-Lantern, Jacky-my-Lantern, Will-o'-tha-Wyke. The mythological name includes the nouns lantern and wyke (the latter is probably a territorially limited variant of wisp "bundle, shrub (of straw, hay)"), which reproduce the folk notions of the wandering fire as a creature with a flickering light in its hands calling the weary travelers to follow him. The tale depicts a wandering light as one of the domestic spirits living on the roof of a sheepfold and eating fresh milk.

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