

MYTH AND CHILDREN'S LITERATURE.

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Annotation. The interaction between myth and children's literature represents an important field of literary and cultural studies. Myths, as the earliest form of collective worldview and symbolic thinking, provide children's literature with archetypal plots, universal characters, and moral patterns. In literary texts for young readers, mythological elements are often adapted to the cognitive level of children and serve educational, aesthetic, and developmental purposes. They contribute to the formation of cultural identity, ethical values, and imagination.

Key words: Myth, children's literature, archetype, mythological image, cultural identity, adaptation, moral values, folklore tradition, narrative transformation.

Mythology, as defined by scholars such as Campbell (2014), refers to a collection of traditional stories, often involving gods, goddesses, and heroes, which serve to explain the origins of the world and natural phenomena. These myths are deeply embedded in the cultural and religious narratives of civilizations throughout history.

Myth in children's literature can open up imaginative new realms that allow child readers to escape from their mundane lives, follow and identify with a male or female hero that battles monsters and demons, before returning home victorious. It can help them to make sense of their place in the world, of birth and death, of the move from childhood to adulthood, and of good and evil. As is the case with adults, all children read differently; therefore, how children interpret myth depends on the knowledge they bring to the reading experience.

Children's literature encompasses a wide range of forms and genres: picture books, illustrated texts, novels, poems, Young Adult fiction, school stories, fantasy, folktales, and so on. As children have had access to texts for millennia, the origins of what we now term 'children's literature' are difficult to establish. Towards the end of the 17th century, authors, printers and booksellers made deliberate efforts to distinguish children's texts from other types of literature, so that by the latter part of the 18th century children's literature was well established as a category of its own.

Specific mythologies have had a significant influence on the development of children's literature in Ireland, Britain and America. The holdings at Trinity College Library offer a glimpse into such processes at work over several hundred years.

Myth contains a poetry that transcends the limitations of history and science. Myths not only give us a sense of where we may have come from but they also provide maps for where we might want to go in life. The word myth comes from the Greek *mythos* meaning word or story, and usually features gods and goddesses that interact in varying ways with the mortal realm. These stories are composed of symbols that provide frameworks for how we might live, encouraging us to look beyond the restrictions of our horizons, and inspiring us to find moments of ecstasy in the mystery of our own mortality. Myths are often attempts to answer the unanswerable: how we came into being; why we fall in love; why we die; and where we might go after death.

Most myths feature heroic journeys, where heroes leave their ordinary home lives, travel to the world of the supernatural, overcome obstacles, and return to their communities with new knowledge and insight, ready to enrich society.

The significance of mythology in literature has been widely acknowledged by researchers such as Smith (2015) and Jones (2018). Mythological motifs and themes provide rich symbolism and archetypes that resonate with readers across different cultures and time periods. Moreover, mythology serves as a universal language, offering writers a vast reservoir of symbols and narratives to draw upon in their creative endeavors. The

incorporation of mythological elements into literature enhances the depth and complexity of storytelling, allowing authors to explore profound themes such as the human condition, morality, and the nature of existence. By tapping into the collective unconscious, mythology enables writers to evoke powerful emotions and insights in their readers, transcending the limitations of individual experience.

In conclusion, the influence of mythology on modern English literature is profound and multifaceted, shaping the themes, motifs, and narrative techniques used by authors across different genres and time periods. Through the analysis of major authors and their works, as well as scholarly views and reinterpretations of myths, it is evident that mythology continues to inspire and enrich literature, providing a rich tapestry of stories and symbols that resonate with readers of all ages.

Used literature:

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