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## MYTHS OF THE PEOPLES OF THE WORLD IN CHILDREN'S READING

Submission Date: June 20, 2023, Accepted Date: June 25, 2023,

Published Date: June 30, 2023

Crossref doi: <https://doi.org/10.37547/ijll/Volume03Issue06-10>

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### ABSTRACT

Children's literature is an organic part of general literature, but has its own specifics, determined by the synthesis of pedagogical and aesthetic requirements. Children's literature focuses on the interests of the reader-child, written taking into account the psychology of a particular age. The language of the children's book is characterized by the richness of the artistic means used and, at the same time, by the availability associated with the selection of means that are close to the perception of the child.

### KEYWORDS

Stories, traditions, myth in children's literature, biblical themes.

### INTRODUCTION

Children's literature is focused on humanistic values and is distinguished by a high artistic level. These requirements make it possible to designate the best children's books and their authors. For merits in the field of children's literature, writers are awarded national and international prizes. The most honorable of them is the "Gold Medal of H.K. Andersen" - has been awarded since 1956 once every two years to a writer, and since 1966 to an illustrator. The award is presented by the Children's Book Council International during the Children's Book Congress. The award

winners are foreign children's writers Tove Jansson, Astrid Lindgren (twice), James Kryuss, Erich Kestner, Gianni Rodari and others, Russian illustrator Tatyana Mavrina. There is also the prestigious A. Green Russian Literary Prize. It has been awarded annually by the Union of Writers of Russia since 2001 (among the laureates are the poet-translator Mikhail Yasnov, the author of stories about children Vladimir Zheleznikov, and others).

In a literal translation from Greek, the word myth means "story", "tradition". However, the myth is not a genre of literature, but represents a system of views within which the world is perceived and described. The mythology of this or that people is understood as a set of stories born of a collective fantasy, in which an explanation of various natural phenomena is given in an artistic and figurative form, the laws of social and cultural development are comprehended. In primitive society, myth was the equivalent of culture and science.

Signs of a myth:

- collectivity of creation;
- variability, ability to transform;
- etiological character;
- unconscious meaningful figurativeness;^
- ideological syncretism.

There is no universal typology of myths, it is customary to single out cosmogonic (myths about the origin of the world), eschatonic (myths about the end of the world), theogonic ^^ (myths about the origin of gods), anthropological (myths about the origin of man), calendar (reproduce natural cycles, are presented in agrarian peoples) and other types of myths.

Various scientific schools were engaged in the study of myth: mythological (the brothers Grimm, M. Muller, A. Afanasiev) - the myth is interpreted as a poetic personification and explanation of incomprehensible celestial phenomena; anthropological. (E. Tylor, J. Fraser, G. Spencer) - a look at the myth as a reflection of actual events; ritualistic (S. Hook, T. Gaster, E. James, F. Raglan) - the connection between myth and ritual is substantiated; psychoanalytic (Z. Freud and his

supporters) - the myth is interpreted as a sublimation of repressed erotic emotions, etc.

Today it is a generally recognized fact of the existence of mythology in every nation. The study of ancient cultures clarifies a lot in the development of world children's literature, the origins of which lie in archaic civilizations, in the era of antiquity, in the early stages of world religions.

### 1. Ancient Greek mythology in editions for children

Among the monuments of the first millennium BC, ancient Greek myths occupy a significant place in the reading of children. They reflect the ideas of the Hellenes about the structure of the world, their moral code, exploits, conquests.

The first written works that reflected the motives of ancient Greek mythology were the Iliad and the Odyssey by Homer (8th century BC). Epic poems arose on the basis of the songs and tales of wandering Aed singers. In later times, ancient Greek myths were reflected in the works of the playwrights Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides.

The plot basis of the ancient Greek epic is the Trojan War: the Iliad tells about Achilles' campaign against Troy, its siege and capture, the Odyssey tells about Odysseus' return to his homeland after the fall of Troy, about his amazing adventures. The Iliad concentrates mainly military-heroic material of ancient legends, in the "Odyssey" - everyday and fabulous. The real story in the epic is intertwined with earlier myths. Visibility and visibility, as characteristic features of Homer's poems, are expressed in the images of numerous gods endowed with human virtues and shortcomings.

It is believed that the common Greek pantheon of gods developed gradually, the image of each god experienced a long evolution.

In editions of ancient Greek mythology for children, different groups of myths are presented, but heroic mythology is preferred. So, in the book by V. Smirnova "Heroes of Hellas" (M., 1980, 1997), the legend of the Argonauts and the exploits of Hercules are retold. The author managed to preserve many characteristic features of the poetry of the ancients: the atmosphere of feat and camaraderie was restored, admiration for people capable of overcoming obstacles was conveyed, and the one-line nature of characters inherent in ancient art was reflected. In Smirnova's retelling, anthropomorphism was also reflected in the depiction of the gods.

The retellings of the ancient Greek epic prepared by E. Tudorovskaya "The Trojan War and its heroes" (M., 1967, 1997), "The Adventures of Odysseus" (M., 1970, 1997) are addressed to younger students. Taking into account the age characteristics of children, the author recounts the epic in prose, rearranges the material compositionally, observing the sequence in the presentation of events, orienting the retelling to folklore poetics.

The rapprochement of myth and fairy tale is noted in the publication "Brave Perseus" (prepared by K. Chukovsky. M., 1973), addressed to children of preschool age. This book is distinguished by fabulous intonation, emotionality of style, reliance on the characteristic features of a fairy tale - repetitions, verbal formulas, hyperbole.

Let us especially note the publications of ancient Greek mythology, carried out in the 1990s by the Belarusian

publishing house "Belfax": "Heroes and Gods of Olympus", "Mythological stories", "Iliad", "Odyssey". The first of the books is a dictionary that introduces children to the basic concepts of ancient Greek mythology. The "Mythological Tales" contains the most vivid, plot myths about the heroes of Hellas, about the participants in the Trojan War. The age orientation of the publication is evidenced by a small amount of stories placed, a lively emotional presentation, vivid illustrations (both books use the works of the Italian artist Piero Cataneo, characterized by deep penetration into the image). The books are also of interest to the adult reader, because the ambiguity of myths is reflected here, individual images and motifs of Greek mythology are interpreted in a new way, reflected in works of art, fixed in popular expressions ("war of the gods", "Trojan horse", "golden fleece", "Pandora's box", "Ariadne's thread", etc.).

## 2. Bible stories in an arrangement for preschoolers

The 1990s, marked by the democratization of all aspects of public life, are characterized by the appearance of previously banned editions of biblical texts. The Bible (literally translated from Greek - books) is a collection of writings of different times and different characters, created in the period from the 12th century BC to the 12th century AD. It includes texts of different genres (myths about the creation of the world, historical narratives, recording of ethical norms, religious poetry, etc.), which make up a kind of literary microcosm.

The Bible is divided into two parts: the Old and the New Testament. The Old Testament was created by adherents of Judaism, the texts included in it were created in Hebrew, partly Aramaic. The most ancient

part of the Old Testament is the song of the prophet Deborah from the book of Judges (XIII BC), the last is the book of the prophet Daniel (mid-2nd century BC).

The Old Testament is divided into three large cycles: the Law, the Prophets, the Scriptures. The first part of the "Law" (Torah), or "Pentateuch", is a chronicle-legislative books prescribed to Moses (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy). The second part - "The Prophets" - consists of several ancient chronicles: the Book of Joshua, the Book of Judges, the four Books of Kings, collections of speeches of the "major" and "small" prophets. "Scriptures" is a collection of texts related to various poetic and prose genres: religious lyrics ("Psalms"), parables ("Parables of Solomon"), reflections on the meaning of life ("Ecclesiastes"), lyrical wedding songs ("Song of Songs"), chronicles (1-2 Chronicles), etc.

The New Testament contains monuments of early Christian literature of the second half of the 1st-beginning of the 2nd century AD. e., created mainly in Greek. The composition of the New Testament includes four gospels - the gospel of the life and teachings of Christ (from Matthew, Mark, Luke and John). Adjacent to the Gospels are the Acts of the Apostles (a story about the life of the Jewish community and the journeys of the apostles), 21 epistles (teachings in epistolary form) of the apostles Paul, Peter, John, James, and Jude. The New Testament also includes the Apocalypse, which is the earliest text in the New Testament part of the Bible (68-69 AD).

The Bible is the basis of Christian and Jewish religious teachings, reading its individual chapters and sections is one of the elements of worship. At the same time, biblical images and stories had an impact on the

development of world art. Thus, Old Testament themes richly nourished literature from Dante's Divine Comedy to T. Mann's Joseph and His Brothers. The images of the New Testament narratives had a universal influence on European fine arts (the works of A. Rublev, A. Ivanov, I. Kramskoy, N. Roerich - in Russian painting; Dürer, Raphael, Leonardo da Vinci, Titian, Crivelli, Tintoretto, Rembrandt, Veronese, Rubens - in European art). The Bible is the world's first printed book and has been translated into over 2,000 languages.

Familiarization of preschoolers and younger schoolchildren with biblical legends is associated with considerable difficulties. Texts created many centuries ago are good for me in detailed commentary, adaptation, and qualified retelling. There are several options for solving this problem. One way is to republish pre-revolutionary books addressed to the children's reader.

Among the reprint publications we can name "Children's Bible, or the Sacred Story in Simple Stories for Reading at School and at Home", compiled by Archpriest A. Sokolov (M., 1996), "The Sacred History for Children" in the retelling of M. Lvova (M., 1994), "A sacred story in stories for children by P.N. Vozdvizhensky" (M., 2005) and others. Of undoubted interest is the book "Teachings of Christ" by L.N. Tolstoy, published by the Perm publishing house in 1994, containing, in addition to retelling the New Testament, conversations with children on religious and moral issues, united by the common title "Children's Wisdom".

Numerous translated editions of the Bible are also addressed to the children's reader: "My First Bible in Pictures" in the retelling for kids by K. Taylor ,



"Children's Bible" in the translation of B. Arapovich, "The Bible for the smallest" translated by M. Zeger and others. The "problem areas" of these publications include dryness, factual retelling, its focus primarily on memory and consciousness, and the lack of explanations necessary for the child.

These shortcomings are devoid of retellings of biblical texts carried out by children's writers. Thus, the authors of the book "The Tower of Babel and Other Ancient Legends", published under the editorship of K. Chukovsky (M., 1989), managed to convey knowledge about the Bible through living pictures. The retellings were compiled by famous children's writers and translators M. Agursky, V. Berestov, N. Grebneva, V. Smirnova, L. Litvinova. The "Tower of Babel" conveys Old Testament legends that are reflected in works of painting, sculpture, literature, preserved in speech ("the Flood", "Tower of Babel", "Balaam's donkey", "Judgment of Solomon", "pandemonium", etc.). Legends with a pronounced adventure, eventful side are selected, imagery is used that distinguishes the works of oral folk art (fairy tale, epic, historical song). The artistic merits of this publication, its possibilities in the aesthetic education of preschoolers are undeniable.

The "Tower of Babel" is supplemented in a peculiar way by A. Men's book "Light of the World" (M., 1992). Compositionally, it consists of 42 small chapters, revealing the life of Christ from birth to ascension. The material is presented in the form of conversations, reasoning, communication between the author and the reader; images, comparisons close to the child are used. The advantages of retelling include the lack of categoricalness, confidence in intonation, the author's ability to speak deeply and simply about complex issues of theology and history.

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