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FAIRY TALES OF VICTORIAN PERIOD: A NARRATIVE ASPECT  
(CASE STUDY OF JOHN RUSKIN'S FAIRY TALE "THE KING OF THE  
GOLDEN RIVER")

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*Статтю присвячено з'ясуванню мовностилістичних засобів створення наративного прийому дидактичної маски та його функції в актуалізації наративних стратегій напруги/зацікавленості/здивування у казці Вікторіанського періоду Джона Раскіна "Король Золотої Ріки". Виявлено, що на стилістичному рівні наративний прийом дидактичної маски реалізується через метаморфозу та метафору.*

*Ключові слова: наративний прийом, дидактична маска, наративна стратегія, казка, Вікторіанський період.*

*Статья посвящена исследованию языковых и стилистических средств создания наративного приема дидактической маски и его функций в актуализации нарративных стратегий напряжения/интереса/удивления в сказке Викторианского периода Джона Раскина "Король Золотой Реки". Выведено, что на стилистическом уровне нарративный прием дидактической маски реализуется через метаморфозу и метафору.*

*Ключевые слова: нарративный прием, дидактическая маска, нарративная стратегия, сказка, Викторианский период.*

*The article deals with the revealing linguistic and stylistic means of creation the narrative method of a didactic mask and its functions in the actualization of narrative strategies suspense/curiosity/surprise in John Ruskin's fairy tale of Victorian period "The King of the Golden River". It has been proved that the narrative method of a didactic mask is realized via metamorphosis and metaphor.*

*Key words: narrative method, didactic mask, narrative strategy, fairy tale, Victorian period. .*

The special relationship that children have with fairy tales makes them not only entertaining but instructive, contributing to children's education and socialization. The most common way of explaining this benefit is to point out that, because they are highly imaginative, fairy tales cultivate young imaginations. Fairy tales can be used

efficaciously to teach without overt sermonizing p. [3, p. 29]. What adults most frequently believe children need from their literature is education. Adults have a task – to teach children what they don't know, from this point of view, literature for children is primarily a didactic literature [1, p. 3].

An interesting question is, what — besides intention — makes a particular story a “children's book”? With the exception of picture books for toddlers, these works are not necessarily shorter or simpler than so-called adult fiction, and they are surely not less well written. The heroes and heroines of these tales, it is true, are often children: but then so are the protagonists of Henry James's *What Maisie Knew* and Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*. Yet the barrier between children's books and adult fiction remains; editors, critics, and readers seem to have little trouble in assigning a given work to one category or the other [6, p. 16].

Literature for children is the literature that is consciously written, addressed or adopted for children. Literature for children sometimes is considered primarily didactic, because children should learn more about the world they live in, about the good and the evil, about themselves.

The **object** of the article is narrative methods of *didactic narrative mask*. The **subject** – linguistic and stylistic methods of creating the narrative method of a didactic narrative mask. Narrative method is assumed to be the way of construing the story-telling, it includes a number of operations, which enable to develop the plot. The means of making the effect of deeping into events, call for thinking and the realization of semantic opposition good-evil in the fairy tale are revealed. The narrator creates the events that happen “right now”. He makes his little reader think and analyze. The narrative method of *didactic narrative mask* enables the narrator be closer to the narratator, so as to make him involuntary feel what is good and what is evil, how he should and shouldn't behave.

John Ruskin, who was famous for his art and social critical articles, the author of passionate works, which became accepted knowledge in various spheres in many European countries, who taught children at St. George's School, the Working Men's

night school, was also a creator of wonderful fairy tales. His creative activity belongs to Victorian period in England. The genre of a fairy tale was popular in the Victorian period and stories for children were in many cases not aimed solely at the youngest audience.

The megametaphor LIFE IS A MORAL QUEST is a conceptual background of the composition of the fairy tale “The King of the Golden River”, it unfolds into a number of conceptual metaphors, actualized in the text. *A quest is “a long or difficult search”* [9, p. 727]. “Moral” implies agency and choice – ‘capable of choosing between right and wrong’ [7, p. 20]. Christian tradition implies three “theological” virtues – faith, hope and love. The virtues, allow the person not only to perform good acts, but to give the best of himself. The virtuous person tends towards the good with all his sensory and spiritual powers, he pursues the good and chooses it in concrete actions [7, p. 20].

However, within this conception there is also an important difference between doing virtuous action and being a virtuous person. Money is a motive in children’s literature, in the sense that many stories deal with a search for treasure of some sort. These quests, unlike real-life ones, are almost always successful, though occasionally what is found in the end is some form of family happiness, which is declared by the author and the characters to be a “real treasure.” Simple economic survival, however, is almost never the problem; what is sought, rather, is a magical (sometimes literally magical) surplus of wealth [6, p. 18].

The fairy tale of John Ruskin “The King of the Golden River” has a very romantic history of its creation as stated in the preface of the story. The author accepted a challenge of a young girl to create a fairy tale for her. It took little time (two sittings) for Ruskin to write a fairy tale, that has become popular all over the world and a few years to become a husband of that brave young lady who the fairy tale was written for. Famous English caricaturists of humor magazine “Punch” John Tenniel, John Leech and Richard Doyle illustrated Ruskin’s fairy tale.

The fairy tale “The King of the Golden River” has a classical plot with typical magic figures, like three brothers, one attempt and magic transformations. Two elder brothers Schwartz and Hans are real drunkards and are very cruel: “*Schwartz and Hans, the two elder brothers, were very **ugly** men, with overhanging eyebrows and **small, dull eyes** which were always half shut, so that you couldn't see into **THEM** and always fancied they saw very far into **YOU**.*” [10]

Gluck, the youngest is a kind and obedient boy : “*The youngest brother, Gluck, was as completely opposed, in both appearance and character, to his seniors as could possibly be imagined or desired. He was not above twelve years old, **fair, blue-eyed, and kind in temper** to every living thing*” [10].

John Ruskin, focuses upon the values that marred the Victorian period, i.e. greed and obsession with material values. The successors to what have been identified as the eighteenth century’s ‘moral fairy tales’ highlighted the particular problems of an industrializing society, such as John Ruskin’s King of the Golden River [5, p. 16].

The narrative method of a mask enables to represent in a fairy tale a didactic adult, a character, who tames and makes it possible to reveal the true essence, true nature of three brothers. First tamer – is the wind, when it appears the truth about brothers – they are greedy and rude – becomes obvious. The wind asks for some help, he needs to get warm and some food. Elder brothers refuse to help him, though they have enough space in the house, a fireplace and plenty of food to treat a stranger.

Only the younger brother Gluck appears to be kind and compassionate, he helps the wind: “*He does look very wet,*” said little Gluck; “*I'll just let him in for a quarter of an hour. That's a good boy,*” said the little gentleman. “*Never mind your brothers. I'll talk to them*” [10]

Another tamer appears in a didactic narrative mask of a mug. Firstly, it is a kitchen utensil – a mug to drink out of, but at the same time, it is an unusual mug, the one that reminds a human: “*The mug was a very odd mug to look at. The handle was formed of two wreaths of flowing golden hair, so finely spun that it looked more like*

*silk than metal, and these wreaths descended into and mixed with a beard and whiskers of the same exquisite workmanship, which surrounded and decorated a very fierce little face, of the reddest gold imaginable, right in the front of the mug, with a pair of eyes in it which seemed to command its whole circumference. It was impossible to drink out of the mug without being subjected to an intense gaze out of the side of these eyes ...”* [10]. The mug was put into the pot to melt, and after a while Gluck heard a strange voice, he poured a melted mug out and it turned into a dwarf. A *stylistic trope – metamorphosis* (its linguistic properties as a trope are determined by its syntactic and stylistic nature, its lexico-semantic field of the predicates is structured by verbs 1) with the seme “*transformation*”, “*reincarnation*”, 2) “*revival*” and 3) “*change of mental and physical states*”.), a mug becomes a dwarf. That dwarf gives a task to brothers: “*To find something that the valley needs each brother has a task – to reach the top of the mountain and pour three drops of holly water into the river, if so – water turns into gold. Each brother has one attempt and one goal: “Whoever shall climb to the top of that mountain from which you see the Golden River issue, and shall cast into the stream at its source three drops of holy water, for him and for him only the river shall turn to gold. But no one failing in his first can succeed in a second attempt, and if anyone shall cast unholy water into the river, it will overwhelm him and he will become a black stone”* [10].

To achieve the peak of the mountain each brother had to pass a *moral quest*, thus to help people on their way who were dying from thirst (an old man, a child), or to drink water they had in a flask themselves, be safe and climb the top of the mountain. Elder brothers thought only about the treasures that they would get after climbing the mountain and did not help a single creature on their way. However, it was a moral quest – they turned into black stones for their black souls.

Only Gluck, the younger brother, passed all the trials. He shared all the drops of water he had with those, who asked for a help, and reached the peak of the mountain: “*as Gluck gazed, fresh grass sprang beside the new streams, and creeping plants grew and climbed among the moistening soil. Young flowers opened suddenly*

*along the riversides, as stars leap out when twilight is deepening, and thickets of myrtle and tendrils of vine cast lengthening shadows over the valley as they grew. And thus the Treasure Valley became a garden again, and the inheritance which had been lost by cruelty was regained by love* “ [10].

The realization of three narrative strategies *suspense, curiosity and surprise* are embodied by means of narrative method of a *didactic narrative mask* (the wind and the mug). The temporal dynamics of reading is specified by Sternberg’s definition of narrativity: ‘I define narrativity as the play of suspense/curiosity/surprise between represented and communicative time (in whatever combination, whatever medium, whatever manifest or latent form).’

Sternberg’s three ‘master strategies’ signify different forms of the tension between expectation and experience. Suspense is based on the expectations about the future (prospection), curiosity directs the expectations to a past, yet unknown experience (retrospection) and surprise marks the disappointment of an expectation (recognition) [8, p. 156].

#### БІБЛІОГРАФІЯ

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## ВІДОМОСТІ ПРО АВТОРА

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