

**THE ELEMENTS OF NEOMYTHOLOGISM IN THE HARRY POTTER
NOVEL SERIES BY J.K.ROWLING**

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Abstract. This article explores the mythological and folkloric roots that permeate J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series, highlighting the author's deep engagement with ancient literary traditions across various cultures. By examining the origins of character names and thematic elements, the article demonstrates how Rowling integrates motifs from Greek, Roman, Norse, Celtic, Egyptian, and Indian mythology to enrich her fantasy world. Characters such as Hermione Granger and Nagini are shown to embody attributes of their mythological counterparts, while legendary figures like Merlin and Morgana anchor the magical universe in well-known folklore. The study emphasizes that Rowling's fusion of ancient myths with contemporary storytelling not only enhances the depth and resonance of her characters but also serves as a bridge between classical literature and modern fantasy. Ultimately, this analysis underlines the timeless relevance of myth and its vital role in shaping the narrative and symbolic structure of Rowling's work.

Keywords: mythology, folklore, Harry Potter, character, neomythologism.

Аннотация: В этой статье исследуются мифологические и фольклорные корни серии книг Джоан Роулинг о Гарри Поттере, подчеркивается глубокое знакомство автора с древними литературными традициями различных культур. Исследуя происхождение имен персонажей и тематических элементов, статья демонстрирует, как Роулинг объединяет мотивы из греческой, римской, скандинавской, кельтской, египетской и индийской мифологии, чтобы обогатить свой фантастический мир. Такие персонажи, как Гермиона Грейнджер и Нагини, воплощают атрибуты своих мифологических собратьев, в то время как легендарные личности, такие как Мерлин и Моргана, закрепляют магическую вселенную в хорошо известном фольклоре. В исследовании подчеркивается, что сочетание древних мифов Роулинг с современным повествованием не только усиливает глубину и резонанс ее персонажей, но и служит связующим звеном между классической литературой и современной фэнтези. В конечном счете, этот анализ подчеркивает непреходящую актуальность мифа и его жизненно важную роль в формировании культуры.

Ключевые слова: мифология, фольклор, Гарри Поттер, персонаж, неомифологизм.

One of the most prominent figures English fantasy is, obviously, Joan Kathleen Rowling. She is known as the only writer who became a billionaire by writing books. While the work shows an unmatched level of creativity and a unique style of delivery, it also contains a great deal of inspirations by various **mythological and folklore stories** of several countries. And, as it is one of the main features of fantasy, the crumbs of ancient literature are going to be discussed in the following chapter.

The first mention is Harry's best friend, Hermione Jean Granger. Her name is taken by Shakespeare's classic play *The Winter Tale*, from the queen Hermione of Sicily [1. 269-346]. Shakespeare, in turn, took the name from the Ancient Greek mythology, the legend of Trojan war, Hermione. She was the daughter of Helen of Troy and the King Menelaus of Sparta. Her namesake was not that significant character in the *Odyssey* who is known for her marriages and sending three ships after her runaway mother [2. 14], but author chose this name for her boss witch because it was unique and had classical ring to it. Rowling said that Hermione's parents chose this name after watching Shakespeare's romance comedy *The Winter Tale*.

Even though the names are not directly mentioned, some characters and scenes have been inspired by one or the other tale in some way. Some of the characters that were originally from different myth and tales include:

1. Greek Mythology

Minerva McGonagall - the strict Transfiguration teacher, the head of the Gryffindor house and a mother-like figure to Harry. Named after Minerva, the Roman counterpart of Athena, the goddess of wisdom and strategic warfare. Like her namesake, McGonagall is intelligent, wise, and a formidable leader.

Argus Filch - janitor and guardian of the Hogwarts castle. Shares his name with Argus Panoptes [3. 783], the many-eyed giant from Greek mythology who was a watchful guardian and a servant of Hera, just like Filch himself: monitoring Hogwarts students and cleaning up after them.

Draco Malfoy - "Draco" means "dragon" in Latin and Greek. Dragons in mythology symbolize power, greed, and danger - traits associated with Draco's character.

Andromeda Tonks (née Black) - Named after Andromeda, a princess in Greek mythology who was chained to a rock as a sacrifice but later rescued by Perseus [4. 60-69].

Narcissa Malfoy - mother of Draco Malfoy, a trophy wife of the wealthy wizarding family's sole heir Lucius Malfoy. Inspired by *Narcissus*, who was obsessed with his own beauty [5. 389-411].

2. Roman Mythology

Remus Lupin - Harry's favourite DADA (Defence Against the Dark Arts) teacher. His name references Romulus and Remus [6. 13], the legendary founders of Rome who

were raised by a she-wolf. "Lupin" comes from *lupus* (Latin for "wolf"), alluding to his werewolf condition.

Sirius Black - Harry's godfather. Named after Sirius, the brightest star in the night sky, also known as the Dog Star, fitting his ability to transform into a black dog.

Regulus Arcturus Black - "Regulus" means "little king" in Latin, and "Arcturus" is another bright star in astronomy. Regulus Black, like his celestial namesake, is associated with leadership and nobility.

3. Norse Mythology

Fenrir Greyback. Named after Fenrir [7. 148-150], the monstrous wolf in Norse mythology who is destined to bring destruction during Ragnarok. Greyback is a feared werewolf who catches the trio in *Deathly Hallows* and nearly brings the wizarding world down, aligning with Fenrir's role in myths.

Ragnarok in the Tale of the Three Brothers. The *Deathly Hallows* tale has similarities to Ragnarok [8. 259], the Norse end-of-the-world prophecy, in which three brothers (akin to the Peverell brothers) face death in different ways.

4. Celtic and Arthurean mythology

Although they are not the actual characters of the series, the main wizards of Arthurian legends Merlin and Morgana show up often during the series of events. First we get to know about them from the choco-frog cards, which children collect [9. 94]. Throughout the books, we see Merlin quite a lot: the order named after him is the greatest achievement of power in the wizarding society [9. 54] and his name is used as an exclamation, like Christians use Jesus in a similar way: "Merlin's beard", said Amos Diggory, his eyes widening, "Harry Potter!" [9. 1007].

5. Egyptian and Indian mythology.

Amos Diggory - a loving and proud father of Cedric Diggory, Harry's friend in Hogwarts. The name is associated with Amon, the ancient Egyptian god which was seen as the king of the gods [10. 20]. The god was seen as the champion and the helper of the poor and the troubled. The character Amos Diggory is also introduced as a very kind fella who was ready to help anyone he can.

Nagini - Voldemort's snake companion. "Nagini" in Sanskrit means "female naga", referring to a female member of the Naga, a class of semi-divine cobra snakes in Hinduism/Indian mythology [11. 423-539]. Nagas can take human form if they want to and are seen as a race of human-serpent or a human with snake's blood. Voldemort's Nagini is known to have lived as a human/witch in her past life [12. 69].

In conclusion, J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series is a testament to the enduring power of mythology and folklore in shaping modern fantasy literature. By weaving together names, symbols, and themes from a wide array of cultural traditions - including Greek, Roman, Norse, Celtic, Egyptian, and Indian myths - Rowling creates a rich, multidimensional world that resonates with readers of all backgrounds. These mythological

references not only deepen the characters and their arcs but also establish a connection between the magical and the historical, the imaginative and the timeless. Through this blend of the ancient and the modern, Rowling invites readers to explore universal truths about heroism, identity, morality, and the human condition, proving that fantasy, far from being mere escapism, is a powerful vehicle for cultural continuity and literary innovation.

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