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**О’ГЕНРИНИН ЧЫГАРМАЛАРЫНДАГЫ АЛЛЮЗИЯ**

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**АЛЛЮЗИЯ В РАССКАЗАХ О’ГЕНРИ**

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**ALLUSION IN O’HENRY’S STORIES**

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Бул макала Америкалык жазуучу О’Генринин “Олуялардын белеги” жана “Куудулдун сырлары” аттуу чыгармаларындагы аллюзияларды анализдейт. Бул иштин максаты америкалык жазуучу О’Генринин аталган чыгармаларындагы аллюзиялардын колдонулушунун өзгөчөлүктөрүн ачыктап берүү болуп саналат. Аллюзиялар О’Генринин жазуу стилинин керектүү элементи катары саналат. Алар белгилүү бир түшүнүктөрдү, көрүнүштөрдү, көз караатарды символдоп, татаал идеяларды жана эмоцияларды кыска түрдө көрсөтүп беришет. Киришүү бөлүмү берилген чыгармалардагы колдонулган аллюзияларды анализдөө үчүн теоретикалык негизин сунуштайт. Атап айтканда, интертекстуалдуулук теориясынын жана аллюзиялардын аныктамасы: этимологиясы, негизги өзгөчөлүктөрү, функциялары жана классификациясы берилет. Андан кийин, практикалык бөлүгүндө аллюзиялардын аталган чыгармаларындагы колдонулушу түшүндүрүлүп, алардын тексттеги функциялары жана контексте карата интерпретациясы берилет. Иштин аягында жалпы корутунду чыгарылат.

**Негизги сөздөр:** интертекстуалдуулук, иштитеме, аллюзия, тарыхый, библиялык, адабий, мифологиялык.

Статья посвящена анализу аллюзий в рассказах американского писателя О’Генри “Дары Волхвов” и “Исповедь Юмориста”. Целью данной работы является выявление особенностей использования аллюзий и их функционирование в вышеупомянутых рассказах. Аллюзии являются неотъемлемым элементом стиля О’Генри. Они служат символами определенных понятий, убеждений и представлений, и применяются для представления сложных идей и эмоций в более сжатой форме. В введении представлена теоретическая основа для проведения анализа аллюзий в данных рассказах. В частности, даются определения теории интертекстуальности и аллюзии: этимология, функции и их классификация. Далее, в практической части даны разъяснения использования автором аллюзий, найденных в

рассказах, их функции в тексте и их интерпретация согласно контексту.

**Ключевые слова:** интертекстуальность, ссылка, аллюзии, литературный, библейский, исторический, мифологический.

This article is dedicated to the analysis of allusions in short stories “The Gift of the Magi” and “Confessions of a Humorist” by the American writer O’Henry. The purpose of this work is to identify the features of the use of allusions in the mentioned stories. Allusions constitute an essential element of O’Henry’s writing style. They are used to symbolize certain notions and introduce complex ideas and emotions in a more concise form. Introduction presents theoretical background for analysis of allusions used in the given stories. Then, in the practical part explication of the usage of allusions, their functions and interpretation of them according to the context is given.

**Key words:** intertextuality, reference, allusions, literary, biblical, historical, mythological.

**Introduction.** At this time, the theory of intertextuality originally developed as part of literary studies, is in the focus of attention of many scholars. Intertextuality most often understood as a similarity or connection between two (or more) texts, which belong to different authors. The term “intertextuality” was coined by famous French poststructuralist Yuliya Kristeva in 1967. So, in the aspect of intertextuality, each new text is viewed as a kind of reaction to already existing texts, and existing ones can be used as elements of the literary structure of new texts. The main linguistic methods of implementing features of intertextuality in any text can be quotations, allusions, aphorisms, foreign words.

Factors which can make recognition and comprehension of insertions from alien speech complicated are: absence of reference and small amount of text.

Both factors are peculiar to allusion.

Allusion, being one of the most popular forms of literary intertextuality, is a figure of speech that makes an implied and indirect reference to a frequently used and well-known fact, a person, an idea, an episode (historical, literary, political, mythological or any other) that is well-established and common in speech. The word allusion comes from the Late Latin *allusio* meaning “a play on words” or “game” and is a derivative of the Latin word “*alludere*”, meaning “to play around” or “to refer to mockingly.”

According to Harold Bloom, who made an observation on the history of the word “allusion”: *“The history of “allusion” as an English word goes from an initial meaning of “illusion” on to an early Renaissance use as meaning a pun, or word-play in general. But by the time of Bacon it meant any symbolic likening, whether in allegory, parable or metaphor, as when in The Advancement of Learning poetry is divided into “narrative, representative, and allusive”. A fourth meaning, which is still the correct modern one, follows rapidly by the very early seventeenth century, and involves any implied, indirect or hidden reference. The fifth meaning, still incorrect but bound to establish itself, now equates allusion with direct, overt reference. Since the root meaning is “to play with, mock, jest at”, allusion is uneasily allied to words like “ludicrous” and “elusion” [1, 126].*

Most scholars-philologists agree that allusion is a presence in the texts of elements, which indicate the relation between one text and another or which refer to particular historic, cultural and biographical facts. And here we can give an example of definition provided by Earl Miner: *“tacit reference to another literary work, to another art, to history, to contemporary figures, or the like” [2, 18].*

An Oxford Dictionary of Reference and Allusion provides the following observation on allusions: *“(Allusions) can be used as a sort of shorthand, evoking instantly a complex human experience embedded with a story or dramatic event. . . . It is often possible to pack more meaning into a well-chosen allusion than into a roughly equivalent descriptive term from the general language either because an allusion can carry some of the connotations of the whole story from which it is drawn, or because an individual's name can be associated with more than*

*one characteristic” [3, 7].*

Scholars give different classifications of allusions, based on their properties, nature, subject of the source, etc. But more often they are categorized according to the source and semantics:

Literary allusions are aimed at reduction of the text, reminding the reader of the events happening, and adding depth and emotionality. Biblical and mythological allusions use references from religious texts. They are the most emotionally filled and are used to give certain features to characters. Historical allusions are aimed at indicating certain historical facts, figures. The most accurate and specific, easy to understand, but the least emotionally saturated, they convey meaningful information.

We will proceed to identifying and analyzing allusions in the short story “The Gift of the Magi” by O’Henry and interpreting them according to the context, considering their origin.

The story under analysis is one of O’Henry’s most famous short stories, which was included in his first collection of short stories called *“The Four Million”*. The story is a classic example of the style inherent to O’Henry that combines irony, a humorous tone, an unexpected ending, poor, working-class characters, that is to say, a skillful and harmonious mix of sentimental, comedic and witty elements.

So, the major characters of the given story are Jim and Della, a young married couple who makes sacrifices to make each other gifts on Christmas Eve. Allusions of interest to our article are mentioned in the episode where Della standing by the mirror let her hair down. The author leads to them starting with a description of two things that represent a special subject of pride for the Dillingham Young couple. The first *“One was Jim's gold watch. The other was Della's hair.”* At the mention of Della's hair, reference is made to the Queen of Sheba. Originating in the Bible, the Queen of Sheba is a figure featured in the stories of many cultures and religious groups. This mysterious female monarch is described in numerous holy books as a great, wise, and wealthy woman who ruled without a king. *“Had the Queen of Sheba lived in the flat across the airshaft, Della would have let her hair hang out of the window some day to dry just to depreciate Her Majesty's jewels and gifts.”* Renowned for her immense wealth and

power, she is mostly known through the tales that revolve around her meeting with the biblical king of Israel Solomon. In all accounts, she is described as offering lavish and incredible gifts of gold, spices and other valuable items: *“And she gave the king a hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of spices very great store, and precious stones: there came no more such abundance of spices as these which the queen of Sheba gave to Solomon.”* O’Henry brought for comparison the Queen of Sheba, in particular, her innumerable wealth and luxurious gifts in order to only focus more on the beauty of Della’s hair. The author’s intention is quite predictable: using such an eloquent example in the story, he emphasizes all the splendor of hair that nature has so generously bestowed on Della. This comparison becomes more advantageous for Della when the reader inquires more about the Queen of Sheba herself. Let us give as an example the following description by Marina Warner in *From The Beast To The Blonde: On Fairy Tales and Their Tellers*: *“In the figure of the Queen of Sheba, the beckoning and voluptuous Orient becomes embodied, its imaginative territory in classical sources encompassed meridian and outlandish exoticism, sensuality, wonder and luxuries.”* Considering all this information, we see that the author’s idea hit the bull’s eye: readers can only imagine what level the incredible brilliance and beauty of Della’s hair could reach, that even the Queen of Sheba with her infinite riches fades against them.

The second case demonstrating the use of allusions by the author refers to biblical figure King Solomon: *“Had King Solomon been the janitor, with all his treasures piled up in the basement, Jim would have pulled out his watch every time he passed, just to see him pluck at his beard from envy.”* The successor of King David, King Solomon ruled the United Monarchy of Israel for an unprecedented 40 years, a period of highest prosperity and grandeur. Till date, he is revered for his unparalleled wisdom and is often referred to as *‘The Wisest Man Who Ever Lived’*. But besides the fact that he was the most knowledgeable man to have ever existed he was also extremely rich. Regarding this, we can give as an example the meeting of Solomon with God described in the 2 Chronicles 1: *“That night God appeared to Solomon and said to him, “Ask for*

*whatever you want me to give you.” Solomon’s answer was: “...Give me wisdom and knowledge, that I may lead this people, for who is able to govern this great people of yours?”* God fulfilled his desire and gave Solomon wisdom and knowledge. But for his disinterested aspirations, God rewarded Solomon with power and unprecedented wealth: *“And I will also give you wealth, possessions and honor, such as no king who was before you ever had and none after you will have.”* From this episode it becomes clear what the scale of Solomon’s possessions and opulence were. And now let’s return to our story, namely to the place where the author mentions King Solomon. It is written that if Solomon, despite his innumerable treasures, would have seen the gold watch of Jim, he would undoubtedly turn green with envy. Considering that Solomon possessed incalculable riches, the reader can only guess about the extraordinary luxury of Jim’s gold watches. The author’s use of biblical allusion only emphasizes Jim’s treasure and makes the comparison more expressive.

It is not by chance that the author refers to two biblical characters who were fabulously rich. He aimed to show that although Jim and Della were poor, each of them possessed a treasure incomparable in beauty and splendor with any other wealth belonging to kings and queen. At the same time, these comparisons and the context of the cited allusions are played out in the author’s characteristic humorous manner: it’s hard to imagine Her Majesty living in a furnished room for \$ 8 a week as well as King Solomon working as a janitor. This is one of the properties inherent in O’Henry’s writing talent - to smooth out the harsh realities of life by putting them in the atmosphere of light, harmless humor. His stories are powerfully pathetic, and yet they are almost always treated in an amusing humorous manner.

Next biblical allusion used by O’Henry “Magi” is explicit one since it is already contained in the title of the story, and in the last paragraph, O’Henry even reveals the essence of this reference: *“The magi, as you know, were wise men - wonderfully wise men - who brought gifts to the Babe in the manger.”* These wise men refer to biblical figures *the Magi* though there is little information about them in the Bible. They were mentioned in the Gospel of Matthew and

were described as visitors “*from the east*” looking for “*the born king of the Jews*” to worship him. After learning that the child is in Bethlehem in Judea, they went there following the star “*ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was.*” There they saw the baby Jesus and his mother Mary, knelt down and worshiped him. The Magi “*presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.*” Their gifts are said to have special symbolic meanings, in particular gold stands for Jesus' status as “*King of the Jews*”; frankincense implies the baby's divinity and identity as the Son of God; and myrrh denotes Jesus' mortality. Undoubtedly, these gifts were wise and it was not for nothing that the author refers precisely to these biblical characters: he identifies the gifts of the wise men with the gifts of the couple and proclaims them to be the wisest of all those who give and receive gifts. Certainly, the act of presenting and getting gifts is not limited to a simple and sole purpose; behind this lie much deeper and more spiritual promptings. These motives are the basis of human nature and are integral elements of the relationship between people – this is both deep love and a willingness to sacrifice the most precious and valuable things for the sake of their loved ones. This is the third case when the author uses the allusion in order to create the necessary associations among the readers and thereby strengthen the effect of the message. Comparing protagonists with biblical characters and even their ascension to the rank of the wisest had their effect: this gave the heroes a special aura of exclusivity which lies in simple, pure but equally valuable thoughts.

Another example of a Biblical allusion is demonstrated in the scene when Della was trying to convince Jim, who looked confused, that her hair will grow again quick: “*...Maybe the hairs of my head were numbered,*” she went on with a sudden serious sweetness, “*but nobody could ever count my love for you. Shall I put the chops on, Jim?*” Italicized line refers to Luke 12:7: “*Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.*” The message is the following: The Lord values each of the people, focuses in on each detail, even hairs just to demonstrate people's great worth in His sight. So, in the story Della is making an attempt to persuade Jim that her love for him is so great that

nothing can compare with this.

Now, we will proceed to identifying and analyzing allusions found in the story “Confessions of a Humorist”.

The story is told on behalf of a certain John who narrates his professional career as a humorist. The plot line is marked by several turns and is replete with expressive means of language

Allusions occur in episodes when the narrator's career begins to decline: “*And then I became a harpy, a Moloch, a Jonah, a vampire, to my acquaintances.*” Here we have three allusions in a row: harpy refers to mythical monster in Greek mythology known for stealing food from victims and snatching away people and things from the earth; Moloch refers to the biblical name of a Canaanite god associated with child sacrifice, a deity whose worship was marked by the propitiatory sacrifice of children by their own parents; Jonah refers to a prophet of the northern kingdom of Israel who disobeyed God and ran away instead of performing God's mission and was thinking only of himself. These allusions symbolize the state of extreme despair into which the narrator was plunged. He finds it harder and harder to make up jokes with former once ease. He is compelled, like harpies, to watch every word of his interlocutors in the hope of snatching a successful joke or a witty statement; similar to that story of the deity Moloch, acquaintances and friends of the narrator sacrifice their utterances to him and like the prophet Jonah, he acts to please his desires, seeking to satisfy only his needs without caring for those inconveniences that are caused to those around him.

Another reference is made to a well-known Aesop's fable about the Fox and the Crow: “*I was a lugubrious fox praising the singing of my friends, the crow's, that they might drop from their beaks the morsels of wit that I coveted.*” The plot of the fable tells about how a cunning fox, due to flattering remarks and compliments, managed to take away a piece of cheese from the crow. The narrator resorts to desperate measures and loses himself, turning into a person who is avoided by those around him. The allusion used by the author eloquently expounds the situation in which the protagonist finds himself. Instead of directly stating the fact and presenting the case in a dry language, O'Henry resorts to a well-known fable, which also creates a comic effect.

Descriptions of the sophisticated attempts of the narrator by all means to obtain witty phrases are not deprived of O' Henry's familiar humor.

The consequent of the “campaign” launched by the main character with the aim of snatching out a good phrase and making use of it was the exploitation of his wife and children. So far, being in the society of his wife has been an enjoyment for the protagonist and her thoughts have delivered pleasure, but now he has turned into a vigilant catcher of those “*inconsistencies*” that are characteristic of the female mind. He openly admits that he deliberately did so that his naive wife shared her revelations without suspecting that they would be shown off display: “*A literary Judas, I kissed her and betrayed her.*” Judas refers to Judas Iscariot, a disciple and one of the original Twelve Disciples of Jesus Christ. In accordance with all four canonical gospels, Judas betrayed Jesus to the Sanhedrin in the Garden of Gethsemane by kissing him and addressing him as “Rabbi” to disclose his identity to the crowd who had come to arrest him. Thus, the narrator compares himself to this infamous traitor, and this is quite explicable: he made the secrets of an unsuspecting wife known to public. Nevertheless, such a comparison is certainly exaggerated and adds a comic

effect to the story.

Examples of allusions used in two given stories reflect the fact that they form a significant component of O'Henry's literary style. Analysis of allusions presented in this article allows us to conclude that allusions help the author to create an expressive colorful text and at the same time add a humorous effect. Rather than engage in spatial explanations, writers use this type of references to more clearly convey their ideas and create a lively image in readers' minds. References to well-known figures and cases and literary excerpts supplement texts with depth, emotionality, spectacular, allure and humor.

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