

The Image of Magical Clothes in English Wonder Tales

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Abstract: The article discusses specific features of magical clothes used in English fairy tales. Their magic features, descriptions and how they are linked with the dreams of people and their thoughts, taboos are given.

The national life of each nation is reflected in its clothing culture. Clothes are a special external protector of the human body. They protect a person from hot and cold weather and rain. Therefore, in folk tales, the image of magical clothes has been artistically interpreted as a protector. Dressing allows people to identify themselves socially, sexually, morally, aesthetically. Magical clothes, and the recognition that they are woven or sewn from magical fabrics, have long been characteristic of folklore.

Keywords: wonder tale, magic, magical clothes, coat, slippers, cap, mantle, national life, culture, history.

In the fairy tales of the world, the images of magical clothes, i.e., a magical hat that makes one invisible when worn, a magical cloak or a magical coat, flying boots, flying shoes, and flying slippers that can transport people to distant destinations in the blink of an eye, occupy a special place.

In English fairy tales, you can often find the images of a magic coat, a magic hat, magic boots, magic shoes, and magic slippers. With their help, an ordinary person becomes a powerful person or becomes invisible, a distant destination will be near.

From ancient times, people have tried to show and break social barriers and express the desires of the human heart through clothes. The artistic expression of this situation is vividly observed in world folk tales such as "Cinderella" in the example of a poor girl entering the royal banquet in the royal palace in luxurious clothes and gaining attention.

In general, magical clothes can cause not only simple changes in the character's appearance, but also radical changes in his life. In some cases, magical clothes also serve to evaluate the moral characteristics of the nature of an epic character. Depending on the clothes of the characters, their status in society is evaluated. Also, by paying attention to their dress code, they are ethically either rewarded or punished.

The interpretation of magical clothes in English fairy tales appears in five different ways:

1. The old, shabby clothes of the epic hero are transformed into a luxurious type of clothing.
2. An epic character wearing a certain outfit becomes invisible.
3. The epic hero flies to his intended destination and reaches it in the blink of an eye.
4. Magical clothing has a knowledge source feature and answers any question you wish.
5. The magical dress has the ability to test women's loyalty, and only a loyal woman can wear it.

But the motif of the epic hero wearing a magic cloak or a magic cap becoming invisible and reaching his desired destination in the blink of an eye is one of the widespread traditional motifs of world folk tales.

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English fairy tales are the main object of our research. The image of magical clothes were analysed in the wonder tales below. For example, in the fairy tale "Jack the giant killer", the main character Jack fights with various giants and defeats them. In this work, magical clothes such as a magic coat, magic slippers, and a magic cap will help him.

The hero receives magical clothes for his service to the giant. Despite the fact that these clothes are very valuable to the giant, he agrees to give them in exchange for Jack's favors. In this tale, you can see the motif of gifting magical items to the main character as a reward:

"I want nothing but the old coat and cap, together with the old rusty sword and slippers which are at your bed's head. "Quoth the giant: "You know not what you ask; they are the most precious things I have. The coat will keep you invisible, the cap will tell you all you want to know, the sword cuts whatever you strike, and the shoes are of extraordinary swiftness. But you have been very serviceable to me, therefore take them with all my heart"².

In the passage above, one can see the description of the features of magic items. While the magic coat makes one invisible, the magic cap is a source of superior knowledge and can tell anything that is asked. And the magic slippers have the ability to deliver to the specified destination very quickly.

In the fairy tale "Black Bull of Norway" the images of *iron shoes* and *magic shirt* are described. Magic boots are given to the girl by the blacksmith, but to get it, the girl fulfills the condition of the blacksmith, i.e. she does his service for seven years:

"At seven years' end she got her iron shoon, clomb the glassy hill, and chanced to come to the old washerwife's habitation"³.

This magical item will help him reach his lover. In the fairy tale, a young knight has a blood-stained shirt and says that he will marry whoever can clean it. The old woman and her daughter, who are negative characters in the fairy tale, cannot remove the stain from his shirt no matter how hard they try. And when the main hero, that is, the lover of the knight, washes it, it is immediately clean.

"The old wife had washed until she was tired, and then she set her daughter at it, and both washed, and they washed, and they washed, in hopes of getting the young knight; but all they could do, they couldn't bring out a stain. At length they set the stranger damosel to work; and whenever she began, the stains came out pure and clean,..."⁴.

From the passage above, it can be seen that the clothing is not described as "magical", but it is understood to be magical from its properties and motifs associated with it. The fact that a blood-soaked shirt is cleaned only by a loved one shows the spiritual connection between two lovers.

Blood was tabooed by ancient tribes, and primitive people avoided looking at it or touching it, because they believed that there was a connection between blood and the soul of its owner. For example, they believed that if they tasted raw meat or blood, the spirit of that animal would enter him. Such views of ancient people led to the belief that blood has magical properties. The image of the magic shirt in "Black Bull of Norway" was also caused by such taboos, superstitions and thoughts in people's minds.

Many nations have a number of customs and traditions related to clothing (especially head and foot clothing). Such superstitions and customs are still preserved. According to the data, head and foot clothes were not usually given to someone, nor were they worn interchangeably with someone.

The motif of the transformation of clothes with the help of magic can be seen in the fairy tale "Tattercoats". The rags of the hero change into shiny, luxurious clothes decorated with precious stones with the influence of the sound of the shepherd boy's flute, and a crown appears on his golden hair.

²Jacobs J. English fairy tales and more English fairy tales. – London, 2002. – P. 85.

³Jacobs J. English fairy tales and more English fairy tales. – London, 2002. – P. 210.

⁴Jacobs J. English fairy tales and more English fairy tales. – London, 2002. – P. 211.



“Before he had finished speaking, the Herd boy put his pipe to his lips and played a few low notes that sounded like a bird singing far off in the woods; and as he played, Tattercoat's rags were changed to shining robes sewn with glittering jewels, a golden crown lay upon her golden hair”⁵.

In the fairy tale "The Story of Sir Balin", which belongs to the series of tales about King Arthur, there is the image of a magical mantle. In the fairy tale, this mantle is presented to the king by a young man.

"The young man pulls out a beautiful, gold-embroidered mantle that will not fit if a woman has not been faithful. He says that all the women in the court must try it on at once".

It is seen that the magical feature of this beautifully embroidered golden mantle is to test women's loyalty. The extract clearly describes the appearance of the garment and its magical properties, and if a woman is unfaithful, she cannot wear this mantle. Neither Guinevere nor the other women of the court can pass this test. There is a girl in the palace who does not leave her room because of her illness. The mantle is suitable only for this girl and is given to her as a symbol of her purity. Later, the girl gives the mantle to the monastery.

In the fairy tale "The Princess and the Fool" there is a magic coat - a coat with a magic pocket. The magical feature of the pocket is that the hero can put whatever he wants in it, in any amount. Even the hero could feed fish in this pocket. Jack, who comes from an ordinary family, is able to fulfill the demands of the princess and marry her with the help of this coat: "You have forgotten my magic pockets, replied Jack. That's where I do my fishing. And he reached into his pocket and pulled out first one fish, and then another, until he had dropped a whole pile of them into the princess's lap"⁶.

In "Prince Pridgio", magical images an invisibility hat, magic boots, a magic purse that never gets empty, and a wish-granting cap were observed:

“When dinner was over, and when the nurse had brought in the baby, all the fairies gave him the most magnificent presents. One offered a purse which could never be empty; and one pair of seven-leagued boots; and another a cap of darkness, that nobody might see the prince when he put it on; and another a wishing-cap; and another a carpet, on which, when he sat, he was carried wherever he wished to find himself”⁷.

Magical objects in this fairy tale were used to show more nationality. The most important aspect of this work is that it describes many things related to the history and religious values of England. These items will help Pridgio become king in the future. The motifs connected with baptism and the church in the fairy tale show the features of Christianity.

In the English version (by Joseph Jacobs) of the world-famous fairy tale "Cinderella" called "Cindermaid", the magical dress and shoes coming out of the nut are depicted, and both types of clothing appear in three different ways:

"So Cinder-Maid shook the tree and the first nut that fell she took up and opened, and what do you think she saw? —a beautiful silk dress blue as the heavens, all embroidered with stars, and two little lovely shoes made of shining copper"⁸.

The given extract describes the appearance of a blue silk dress and shoes made of shiny copper, then in the following passages you can see an image of shoes made of silver and gold and a dress of gold and green silk: "But this time she found a dress all golden brown like the earth embroidered with flowers, and her shoes were made of silver;" "And when she opened the nut in it was a dress of silk green as the sea with waves upon it, and her shoes this time were made of gold..."⁹.

⁵ Jacobs J. English fairy tales and more English fairy tales. – London, 2002. – P.236.

⁶ Kerven R. English fairy tales and legends.UK, 2009. – P. 49.

⁷ Lang E. Prince Pridgio.Project Gutenberg Ebook. – P.12.

⁸ <https://fairytalez.com/cinder-maid-joseph-jacobs-version-cinderella/>

⁹ https://fairytalez.com/cinder-maid-joseph-jacobs-version-cinderella



The emergence of luxurious clothes from the walnut shows the aspirations and dreams that exist in the minds of people, the ideas and thoughts of people are verbalized in the image of magical objects. Magical property of the walnut goes back to totemism and magic in clothes is the sign of fetishism.

Magical objects in English and Uzbek fairy tales are one of the important factors determining the nature of wonder tales. These objects play an important role in the plot-motive composition of fairy tales, in enhancing the artistic nature of fairy tales, in the development of plot events, and in revealing the character of the heroes.

In English fairy tales caps, hats, mantles, coats, boots, shoes and slippers are depicted as magical objects and artistically interpreted as human protectors. They also represent thoughts and ideas of the nation that created fairy tales. They are verbalization of the dreams of people to make life easier and to defeat evil.

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