**Anna Shotova-Nikolenko**

*Ph.D. in Philology, Associate Professor*

*Odesa State Environmental University*

*Odesa, Ukraine*

*shotova.anna@gmail.com*

*orcid.org/0000-0003-0277-6008*

## THE ONOMASTIC SPACE OF JOHN KEATS'S ODES

**Abstract.** *John Keats (1795 – 1821), one of the brightest and unique representatives of English Romanticism of the XIX century, widely used the onym vocabulary in his romantic writings, mainly of mythological nature, but also referred to the proper names of the starry heaven. The subject matter of the article is functional and stylistic specific onym character in the analyzed poetical works. The task is to analyze the onomastic poetry content. The objective of the study is to describe and to determine the position and function of mythological and cosmic onymia in the lyrics of John Keats.*

*The conducted analysis proves that use of one or another onym first of all depends on each author's work contents and theme which further stipulate functioning of certain onym lexis, and arrangement of the onym space peculiarities.*

### Introduction.

In the system of general theory of artistic speech**,** which is characterized by versatility, a variety of creative approaches to the literary texts and idiostyles of their authors, from the second half of the twentieth century was actively developed one of its important branches – the theory of literary onomastics, which was initiated by significant works of the scientists Yu. O. Karpenko, V. M. Mikhailov, O. V. Superanskaya, etc. The onomastic researches will always have scientific relevance, novelty and

perspective, since the studying of proper names is inexhaustible in the illimitable ocean of the world literature.

Proper names and literary work are the links of one lexical system created by its author to realize his conception. Therefore, the studying of the onym space of a specific literary work, the analysis of onym functions which are striking, powerful features of the author's penmanship, are very important to understand the unique linguistic view of an author's creative imagination.

In his work "About the Language of Fiction" (1959), V. V. Vinogradov emphasized: "The language of the playwriter, the language of the lyricist, the language of the novelist – are different in their semantic structure, stylistic tasks, in their constructive principles. These differences are largely dependent on the specific properties of different genres of verbal-artistic creativity and different types of artistic language" [6, p. 21].

In the article "Some Problems of Literary Onomastics" (1988), T. V. Nemirovskaya proposed a scheme of division of literary onymia by genres of a literary work: 1) onymia of poetry, or poetic onomastics, – lyrics, poems, ballads; 2) onymia of prose, or artistic onomastics, – stories, novels; 3) onymia of dramaturgy, or dramatic onomastics, – comedies, dramas, tragedies [21, p.112-113].

With regard to the typology of poetic onymia, Yu. O. Karpenko in his work "The typology of poetic onymia: M. Bazhan, B. Pasternak, P. Tychyna" (1992) emphasizes the lyrical principle (the figurativeness of proper names, their phonetic instrumentation), the epic principle (the significance of proper names, their direct, not figurative use), the humorous principle (the combination of not combining, the focusing on laugh), as well as the lyrical (changeable and colorful like a rainbow) or epic (powerful and monumental like a tower) principles of choice and use of proper names [16, p. 19].

O. I. Fonyakova considers poetic creativity as one that represents the maximum freedom of search, the principles of the name usage and the ways of its transformation: the freedom of associative approximation and comparison, the creation of a new form and meaning in context, the searching for new ways of incorporation into the context, the creation of semantic versatility and diffuseness of artistic semantics of proper name.

In the poetic text, onym always undergoes a certain transformation, depending on the author's purpose, capable of focusing the reader's attention like no other means of lexical nomination, because the range of his connotations is unusually wide [27, p. 81].

The dynamic nature of the semantics of the onyms, their ability to accumulate all forms of information refers to the named objects, made them extremely attractive, especially in poetry, a means of figurativeness [12, p. 222], creating brief metaphorical contexts [27, p. 77]. The great importance of proper names in the creation of artistic time-space, inherent in one form or another to all literary works, is well known. In poetry, it is especially growing: both laconic and more precise [16, p. 19].

The onomastic investigations include the method of description and its main techniques: observation, interpretation, generalization; a basic functional and stylistic method for studying literary onomastics is applied, which involves a broad involvement of contextual analysis. The use of the statistical method helps to generalize the data obtained during in the systematic analysis, and to confirm reliability thereof.

The main purpose of the onomastic research on literary onomastics is to analyze the onymic content of a literary work, that is, the functional loading of proper names, their participation in the creation of an artistic whole, the peculiarities of usage of onyms in literary works.

The studying in the field of literary onomastics includes the following tasks:
1) identification and systematization of proper names of all onomastic classes used in writer's works;
2) establishing the frequency and variability of each proper name in the works;
3) identification of onymic changes and variations recorded in different editions of the studied works;
4) interpretation of the functional loading of proper names and consideration of each onym in particular;
5) defining the specific features of proper names in the context of works, their expressive and stylistic role, the relationship between the genre of the work and proper names;
6) comparison of features of onyms' usage in the novels of a writer or a poet.

The study of the functioning of onomastic vocabulary in the language of a literary work is a voluminous and complex topic, because in the symbolization of the text the essential role belongs precisely to proper names, because here "proper name should always be the object of careful attention, we might say, it is the king of signifiers: it's social and symbolic connotations are very rich" [2, p. 432]. As it is known, textual analysis aims to explore ways of creation of the text, to penetrate into the semantic volume of a work of art [2, p. 425]. Thus, proper name is as an accurate and subtle tool of artistic writing, which becomes an artistic detail in a work of exceptional weight [22, p. 23]. As a rule, the object of close attention of the researchers is the onomastic space, the onomastic paradigm of the text and in general the creativity of the writer or poet, as well as the semantic and functional specificity of proper names in the text [24, p. 5]. The modern linguistic and onomastic studies based on classical fundamental works by V. V. Vinogradov [6], V. N. Mikhailov [20], V. A. Nikonov [23], A. V. Superanskaya [25], Y. O. Karpenko [13, 14, 15], V. A. Kukharenko [18, 19], L. A. Beley [3, 4], V. M. Kalinkin [12]. The study of the onomastic space of works of writers and poets of different linguistic and cultural literary periods reveals unlimited possibilities for the scholars-onomasticians.

The purpose of this article is to outline onomastic space and identify the artistic and stylistic functions, peculiarities of usage of proper names in lyrical verses by John Keats's – "Ode on a Nightingale" (1819), "Ode to Psyche", "Ode on Grecian Urn", "Ode on Melancholy", "Ode on Indolence", "To Autumn".

Consequently, the object of our study is onyms of John Keats's odes. The subject matter is functional and stylistic specific onym character in the analyzed poetical works. The task is to analyze the onomastic poetry content.

In the study, the method of description and its main techniques were applied, such as: observation, interpretation and generalization. We also applied a basic functional and stylistic method of studying the belles-lettres onomastics supposing a wide use of the contextual analysis. The statistical method helped to generalize the data obtained in the systematic analysis, and to confirm reliability thereof.

John Keats (1795-1821) – a brilliant representative of the blossoming era of English Romanticism of XIX century, known for his innovative creative searches in a variety of poetic forms (poems, sonnets, odes), top talent is considered by many literary critics, is his odes – "Ode to Psyche", "Ode on Grecian Urn", "Ode on a Nightingale", "Ode on Melancholy", "Ode on Indolence", "To Autumn". As noted by the poet's creative heritage researcher, Peter Harness: "Keats's literary legacy is extremely wide-ranging, and touches a great variety of moods, methods and subjects. He ranges over themes of beauty, art, melancholy, nature and poesy, viewing them from many different angles and in many different poetical forms. But it's not for nothing that his late Odes, particularly "Ode to a Nightingale", "Ode to Grecian Urn", and "Ode to Melancholy", have proved his most famous and popular pieces. They have a maturity and confidence which gives a tantalising glimpse of the direction his next works might have taken, had he lived to 'glean' his 'teeming brain' further" [28, p. 11].

Aesthetic ideal of poetry by John Keats is in search of beauty and harmony existing in nature and for the poet connected with reality and inalienable from the truth: "Beauty is truth, truth is beauty – that is all you know on earth and all you need to know" [1, p. 255] or "A thing of beauty is a joy for ever: // Its loveliness increases; it will never // Pass into nothingness; but still will keep // A bower quiet for us, and a sleep // Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing " [29, p. 58]. (Endymion, 1817).

## 1. The Proper Names in "Ode to a Nightingale"

The verse "Ode to a Nightingale" accumulates the concept of sadness: not in the accumulation of sorrow should find sadness – there it disappears – but joy, because in a joy we can find sadness of Melancholy, we just must understand it [7, p. 654]. If in the other odes John Keats addresses to the reader, in this poetry the poet turns to the nightingale, telling him "you". In the very word *nightingale* incorporated the word *night*, so English-speaking readers more than Ukrainian-speaking or Russian-speaking readers understand that this ode is nocturne [7, p. 653], which is a little literary, mainly

lyrical work characterized by night dreamed moods [9, p. 511]. By the way, the title of the famous novel by American writer Francis Scott Fitzgerald (1896–1940) – "Tender is the Night" (1934) is a line of analyzed poetry "Ode to a Nightingale", as the epigraph to the novel that characterizes the author's thinking style and reveals the essence of this novel: under the guise of outward well-being of the main characters' life the mysteries hide:

Already with thee! **tender is the night …**

… But here is no light,

Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown

Through verdurous glooms

and winding mossy ways [30, p. 3].

It is known that the title is actively involved in the creation of the subtextual information, works on a theme, an idea and an artistic concept, has several semantic levels that indicate different sides of the work, different opinions and evaluations of the writer [11, p. 3]. John Keats was one of the most beloved poet of F. C. Fitzgerald. In a letter to his daughter dated August 3, 1940, he advised Scottie to read "Ode to a Nightingale" stating: "When I read these lines, I always have tears in my eyes" [10, p. 647].

So onomastic space the poetry "Ode to a Nightingale" has five mythonyms and one biblical name. The use of onymic vocabulary of  mythological character took a prominent place in the literature of the XVIII century – the first half of XIX century (between classicism and romanticism), where mythological proper names played a special role with theirs conventionally allegorical images and symbols: they were full of various mythological allusions, images of ancient gods and heroes featured in the description of the depicted events and in presenting abstract concepts [8, p. 121]. John Keats operates the most famous mythonyms such as ***Lethe***, ***Dryad***, ***Flora***, ***Hippocrene***, ***Bacchus,*** which in the context of "Ode to a Nightingale" become one of the main factors of artistic figurativeness, because after the name of each of them – "a long trace of certain semantic nuances" [11, p. 61].

In the analyzed poetry, John Keats uses two mythotoponyms – the hydronyms ***Lethe*** and ***Hippocrene***, respectively the river Lethe and the source of Hippocrene.

In ancient Greek mythology ***Lethe*** is a river in the reign of the dead, after drinking the water of which the souls of the dead forget about their former life on earth [26, vol. 2, p. 51] in literature and art has a well-set symbolism – it is an indicator of oblivion, in the same set sense the poet uses this mythonym, emphasizing his emotional mood of sadness and sorrow:

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains

My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,

Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains

One minute past, and ***Lethe-wards*** had sunk [29, p. 160].

The hydronym ***Hippocrene*** is a source on Mount of Muse – Helicon, in Boeotia, which had the magical property of inspiring poets. According to legend, this source appeared from the kick of the horse's hoof Pegasus. In a figurative sense, Hippocrene is a source of inspiration [5, p. 49]. In this case, John Keats uses this mythonym allegorically, meaning – "*a wine cup*":

O for a beaker full of the warm South,

Full of the true, the blushful ***Hippocrene***

That I might drink, and leave the world unseen [29, p. 160].

The mythonym ***Dryad*** (in Greek mythology, this nymph is the patron saint of trees [5, p. 59]) is used by the poet in the composition of the paraphrase – *the light-winged Dryad.* Thus, Keats names the main character of the ode – a nightingale:

That thou, light-winged ***Dryad*** of the trees,

In some melodious plot

Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,

Singest of summer in full-throated ease. [29, p. 160].

Mythonym ***Flora*** (in Roman mythology, the goddess of flowers, orchards, youth and pleasure [26, vol. 2, p. 569]) in the context of poetry is the embodiment of nature and merriment:

O, for a draught of vinetage! that hath been

Cooled a long age in the deep-delved earth,

Tasting of *Flora* and the country green,

Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth! [29, p. 161].

In the poetry "Ode to a Nightingale" the mythonym ***Bacchus*** is the god of vegetation, the patron of viticulture and winemaking [5, p. 57]. John Keats uses this set meaning – wine and cheerfulness associated with it the poet transforms into coziness and silence, embodying Poesy:

Away! away! For I will fly to thee,

Not charioted by ***Bacchus*** and his pards,

But on the viewless wings of Poesy,

Through the dull brain perplexes and retards. [29, p. 162].

The Biblical reminiscence name of Ruth is mentioned by the poet in the context of the Old Testament plot, which tells of the Moabite Ruth, who became so attached to mother's husband that she left her native land after his death and moved with her to Bethlehem sharing all the difficulties of life, every day working in the field, collecting ears [26, v. 2, p. 391]:

Perhaps the self-same song that found a path

Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,

She stood in tears amid the alien corn [29, p. 163].

Thus, organically interwoven with the lyrical and philosophical tonality of the lyrical verse "Ode to a Nightingale", the mythonyms ***Lethe, Dryad, Flora, Hippocrene, Bacchus*** create a vivid metaphorical context, perform text-forming function and enhance emotional-expressive influence on the reader and radiate a unique onomastic beaming of antiquity in the romantic sense of this thoughtful and masterfully written poetry by John Keats.

## 2. The Proper names in "Ode to Psyche" and "Ode on Melancholy"

Unsurpassed example of John Keats's poetry is his poetic works – "Ode on Grecian Urn", "Ode to Psyche", "Ode on Melancholy", "Ode on Indolence", "To

Autumn". In these lyrical works, John Keats's peculiar perception of nature, the boundless power of imagination, the extraordinary ability to inspire the whole surrounding world, as well as to elevate to the degree of truly beautiful phenomena and objects of real life, were manifested [1, p. 255]. The aesthetic ideal of John Keats's poetry is to find the beauty and harmony that exist in nature and for the poet connected with reality and inalienable from the truth. As it is known, there are two varieties of odes: praise odes, which have a traditional meaning – the genre of lyrics, a poem that expresses the sublime feelings caused by important historical events, the activities of historical persons and "gentle" – anacreonic – the genre of lyricism, which is cheerful, light-hearted, imbued with the motives of earthly happiness, hedonism, love [9, p. 515]. Thus, in the creative heritage of John Keats, the second kind of this lyrical genre prevails – anacreonic odes, in which the poet was especially able to convey the beauty, harmony and grandeur of nature, appealing to ancient culture and art, to ancient Greek myths, and therefore to mythonyms.

The poetry "Ode to Psyche" (1820) has 5 mythonyms, including mythonym *Psyche* and *Olympus, Phoebe*, *Vesper* and mythonyms in plural form *Dryads* and *Olympians*.

Psyche is known to be one of the Late Antique deities, the embodiment of the soul and the breath associated with the wind blowing, the whirlwind, the winging [26, v. 2: 344]. It is known mainly because of Apuleius' novel "The Golden Donkey", in which the writer united various myths about Psyche and created a poetic tale about the wanderings of the human soul, which desires to merge with love. According to the work of Apuleius, Psyche (Soul) is mortal since birth, but has become immortal due to remaining faithful to her husband Amur (Love). Canonically, Psyche was not included in the classical pantheon and became widely known only during the Renaissance, where this story gained great popularity and served as the topic of many significant works of literature and works of art in different countries of Europe. As John Keats noted in his letter to George and Georgiana Keats of April 30, 1819: "You certainly remember that Psyche was not depicted as a goddess until the time of Apuleius Platonic, who lived after the time of Augustus, and it means that this goddess they never

worshiped or worshiped her with all the fervor of antiquity – and maybe never thought of her in ancient religion; I am more orthodox and cannot afford a pagan goddess to remain in such negligence" [7, p. 651]. So, it is clear from where Keats's remarks: "*in the family of the immortal she is younger*", "*she has no temple*":

O latest born and loveliest vision far

Of all ***Olympus'*** faded hierarchy!

Fairer than ***Phoebe's*** sapphire-regioned star,

Or ***Vesper,*** amorous glow-worm of the sky;

Fairer than these, though temple thou hast none,

Nor altar heaped with flowers [29, p. 153].

Singing out the unique beauty and soulfulness of Psyche, John Keats places this mythonym above the entire pantheon of Olympic gods.

It is well known that mythotoponym ***the Olympus*** is the sacred mountain of the ancient Greeks in northern Thessaly, considered to be the dwelling place of the gods, which has set meaning in the literature – the assembly, the Olympic gods' pantheon [5, p. 99] in the context of the ode acquires the connotation of the "discolored pantheon of gods" in comparison with the emotional and external brightness of Psyche according to the artist.

Apollo is known to be the god of art and artistic inspiration [26, v. 1: 95], as well as the deity of sunlight and stars. In this regard, there is already widespread in epic poetry another name – ***Phoebe*** – from Greek – *shining, sparkling* [5, p. 19] as John Keats represented, noting that Psyche brighter and more beautiful "dark-blue (sapphire) star Phoebe" (***"Phoebe's sapphire – regioned star"*** [29, p.153]) and keeping in mind the second by brightness (after Arcturus, in the constellation of Bootes) star in the northern hemisphere of the sky – blue Vega in the constellation Lyra [17, pp. 18–19 ]. The astronym ***Lyra*** (in the starry sky this constellation is the perfect parallelogram) – in ancient Greek myths is the eternal attribute of Apollo (Phoebe), a musical instrument that he made by pulling strings on the shell of a turtle [17, p. 19]. So here we have a poetic paraphrase for the denotation of the astronym Vega with the onymic component ***Phoebe***, which has a set meaning in poetry – the poetic symbol of the Sun

and stars. As for the other mythonym *Vesper* (Greek variant – *Hesper*) – the deity of the evening star, is one of the names of the planet Venus as the evening star, hence the epithet "love", and therefore also is an astronym: "Or *Vesper*, amorous glow-worm of the sky" [29, p. 153]. The ancient Greeks for a long time did not know that the morning and evening star is planet Venus [5, p. 46]. In English poetry, there is a widespread story about a worm or a firefly who cherishes a flower in love with it. It is interesting to note that in the subtext of the ode there is a contradiction between the heartiness of spiritual world and the hardships and thorns of life, then in any case, antiquity is not an ideal here, since it has neglected the Soul (Psyche) along with modernity. So, John Keats in a metaphorical context personifying Psyche:

Surely I dreamt to-day, or did I see

The winged Psyche with awakened eyes? [29, p. 152].

As well as poetizing in the image of Psyche not only the general spiritual world of man, but also the special tenderness, spirituality of this world, which embodies this myth:

But who wast thou, O happy, happy dove?

His Psyche true! [29, p. 152].

In these lines, John Keats identifies Psyche with a dove, which, as it is known, in the religious tradition symbolizes the soul that leaves the person at the moment of death. But there is another traditional interpretation of the visual look of Psyche – a butterfly or a young girl with butterfly wings, formed in the V – IV centuries BC. [5, p. 125].

Mythonym *Olympians* expressive form which also means the carriers of similar characteristic properties, namely indicates the inhabitants of Mount Olympus, that is, Greek gods, which the artist gives the epithet "unclear" (faint) as opposed to Psyche, which has "*bright-transparent wings, fluttering among the obscure Olympians*":

O brightest! ... Yet even in these days so far retired

From happy pieties, thy lucent fans,

Fluttering among the faint *Olympians*,

I see, and sing, by my own eyes inspired.

So let me be thy choir, and make a moan

Upon the midnight hours [29, p. 153].

The plural mythonym ***Dryad***, which embodies the spirits of trees in Greek mythology [5, p. 59], in poetry, appear as beautiful girls to emphasize the romantic and mysterious atmosphere associated with nature in the work:

Yes, I will be thy priest, and build a fane

In some untrodden region of my mind, ...

And there by zephyrs, streams, and birds, and bees,

The moss-lain Dryads shall be lulled to sleep [29, p. 154].

In the following work "The Ode to Melancholy" (1819), John Keats emphasizes that a man may be miserable, but life is always beautiful, and if a man is able to feel, then even in his own grief he will find an element of beauty [1, p. 255]. So, in this ode the poet used three mythonyms: ***Lethe***, ***Proserpine*** and also ***Psyche***.

The mythonym ***Lethe*** (a river in the kingdom of the dead, drinking the water of which the souls of the dead forget about their former life on earth [26, v. 2, p. 51]) has a well-established symbolism in literature and art – an indicator of oblivion, the lever of Life and Death. A similar connotation – "the *river of forgetfulness, which should not be approached, not to lose the memory of the earth*" can see in this ode by John Keats:

No, no, go not to ***Lethe***, neither twist

Wolf's-bane, tight-rooted, for its poisonous wine:

Nor suffer thy pale forehead to be kissed

By nightshade, ruby grape of ***Proserpine*** [29, p. 164].

The mythonym ***Proserpine*** (in Greek mythology corresponds to Persephone) – the goddess of the kingdom of the dead, as well as of vegetation. According to the myth, Hades fell in love and stole Proserpine from her mother, the goddess of the land Ceres (from Greek Demetra), who sent drought and crop failure to the earth from her grief. Hades had to return Proserpine to her mother, but gave her a taste of the pomegranate grain so that she would not forget the kingdom of death and return to it again [26, v. 2, p. 305].

The mythonym ***Psyche*** is personified by John Keats, as in the previous ode, with the human soul, but here the poet already speaks of a separate soul of each person, who should not be sad and melancholy:

Make not your rosary of yew-berries,

Nor let the beetle, nor the death-moth be

Your mournful ***Psyche***, nor the downy owl

A partner in your sorrow's mysteries [29, p. 164].

So mythonyms in lyrical works "Ode to Psyche" (1820) (***Psyche***, ***Olympus***, ***Phoebe***, ***Vesper***, ***Dryads***, ***Olympians*** ) and "Ode on Melancholy" (1819) (***Lethe***, ***Proserpine***, ***Psyche***) create vivid metaphorical and figurative context of its unique multicolored shimmer senses, concentrate a substantial part of the contents odes, and therefore fulfill expressive and aesthetic function. Created by John Keats symbolic speech using mythonym nominations in the context of his romantic works, unique, despite the wide cultural connections, analogies and associations of mythological onyms.

**Conclusions.**

The exploration of the odes by John Keats carried out testifies to the great powerful prospects of further studying of the onomastic space of John Keats's works, which is very deep and functionally rich, and which certainly needs a deep and detailed study. The investigation has studied the artistic functions, frequency and the peculiarities of usage of such class of onomastic vocabulary as mythonyms. Creating bright, figurative context, mythological proper names convey the necessary plot lines which correspond to a certain creative poets' intention in each given verse. Being additional source of emotionality and expressiveness mythonyms become peculiar capacious and laconic linguistic-stylistic device which realizes artistic-aesthetical substantiality of John Keats's poetical works.

So literary onomastics investigates the role and problems, mechanisms, stages of studying proper names in the work, analyzes the role of proper names in creating a unique artistic world of the literary work and in revealing the creative idea of the

author. Among the unresolved problems in literary onomastics is the definition of the boundaries of onomastic vocabulary in the literary work, since they have been very blurred in the individual-author's speech. There are also differences in the description of onyms' semantics and functions. Thus, the study of the functioning of onomastic vocabulary in the language of fiction (novels, verses, stories) is a voluminous and complex subject. It is stated that without the analysis of proper names, these central knots of artistic work, a real understanding of the text, its deep, subtext content layers is simply impossible. As it is known, the poetonymosphere (system of proper names) of an artistic work is the only solid cemented by the author's component of a work, which in the finished work of changes does not undergo. Each one is in its place, harmonizes with other onyms, working together for an artistic whole. But from the work to the work, depending on the literary direction, the depicted events, philosophical and outlook guides of the writer the poetonymosphere is definitely changing. There are no two identical works of one writer which would have the same system of proper names. Each work has its own system of proper names, which is unique and peculiar, as the literary work itself. The more skillful a writer, the more brightly he inserts onyms into his artistic canvas.

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