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English Author Dictionaries as Contribution to National Heritage

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Abstract: The paper is devoted to cultural heritage dictionaries with special reference to the oldest branch of English lexicography – author lexicography, comprising three hundred reference books of different types: concordances, glossaries, lexicons, indices, thesauri, etc. The article describes the main trends in developing author linguistic dictionaries for general and special purposes to single and complete works of G. Chaucer, W. Shakespeare, J. Milton, other famous English writers since the 16th c. up to the present days. The architecture of author encyclopedic dictionaries (guides, encyclopedias, companions) and onomasticons (dictionaries of characters and place names, who is who in ... series) and their significant contribution to the English language, culture and society are discussed. The main accent is made on the digital era of English heritage lexicography, innovative features of modern printed and Internet author reference resources, aimed at certain target groups users' needs and demands.

Keywords: culture, heritage, author, lexicography, dictionary.

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Introduction

The aim of the article is to show how English author (or writer) lexicography contributed to British national heritage. The objectives of this research are to define the main groups of reference books to the complete and single works of famous English writers. Linguistic and encyclopedic author dictionaries form the subject of the paper. The scope of the material covers all types of author dictionaries with special reference to Geoffrey Chaucer, William Shakespeare, John Milton and other prominent English intellectuals, published since the 16th c. up to now. Methods of dictionary reviewing and lexicographic analysis are applied to the description of dictionaries architecture. The relevance and novelty of the research are to discover the main types of linguistic and encyclopedic dictionaries through trends of formation, development and modern state of English lexicography.

Dictionaries of national languages are called treasure troves of national heritage, which reflect the linguistic and cultural portrait of the nation, its history and traditions (Considine, 2019, p. 2). England is famous for its *Oxford English Dictionary*, based on historical principles, which registers and describes English words within its evolution up to the present days. It has long and rich traditions in compiling both norm-based dictionaries of a national language for *general purposes* and a wide variety of dictionaries for *special purposes*.

Many types of special reference books, such as slang, new words, dialectal lexis, collocations, archaisms, proper names, terms, idioms, phraseology, etc. are the most vivid examples of lexicographic endeavours, which reflect linguistic and cultural peculiarities of special groups of lexis combined into separate groups (Considine, 2008, pp. 15–20). These dictionary projects paved the way for other types of linguistic dictionaries created either on their own basis or parallel to academic dictionaries of a national language.

The majority of English special-purpose dictionaries have a very strong cultural component, for example, monasticisms, lingual-cultural and idioms dictionaries, dictionaries to single and complete works of famous English writers, politicians and philosophers, proverbs, quotations, concordances and glossaries to the English translation of the Bible, *Beowulf*, etc. (Alhastova, Karpova, 2020).

1. Linguistic Author Dictionaries

1.1 Chaucer's Dictionaries

English author lexicography represents the largest group of reference works in English national lexicography. There are three hundred linguistic and encyclopaedic (monolingual and bilingual) dictionaries of different types, sizes and formats to more than eighty English poets and writers, which appeared in the 16th c. Among them, we discover different genres of reference books to Geoffrey Chaucer (40 dictionaries), John Milton (10 dictionaries), Alexander Pope, Charles Dickens (10 dictionaries), Alfred Tennyson (eight dictionaries) and other prominent English men of letters (Karpova, 2011).

The majority of author dictionaries belong to a *linguistic branch* of English author lexicography, i.e. concordances, glossaries, lexicons (explanatory dictionaries), indices (frequency dictionaries), thesauri (thematic dictionaries), which for many years served as a fruitful source of cultural knowledge on England and Great Britain. G. Chaucer was the first English writer to attract lexicographer's attention. His early glossaries and concordances referred to the *prescriptive* type of author dictionaries, fixing *difficult*, *hard*, *remarkable* or *obscure* words, which lexicographers selected according to their preference, thus making reference books rather subjective. Moreover, their compilers tried to offer English contemporaries *elegant* norm of usage (*say it like Chaucer*). The microstructure of these glossaries, for example, Th. Speight's famous glossary *The Old and Obscure Words in Chaucer Explained whereof either by Nature or Derivation* (Speight, 1598), provided only two information categories: grammar label and definition.

Since the 16th c. dictionaries to G. Chaucer's works formed a separate branch in English author lexicography – *Chaucer lexicography*, which up to now has been enriched by a large variety of reference works, such as glossaries, lexicons and concordances with full macrostructure and informative articles, including various labels: stylistic, etymological,

chronological, statistic and citations from the writer's works. It is interesting to note that many quotations from G. Chaucer's concordances were borrowed by Samuel Johnson's for his famous *Dictionary of the English Language* (Karpova, 2011, p. 35).

Unlike early glossaries, G. Chaucer's reference works of a new generation used to fix every word from his complete works. *A Lexical Concordance to the Works of Geoffrey Chaucer* in 5 volumes, compiled by a famous Japanese scholar A. Oizymi (Oizymi, 2003), is considered to be the most comprehensive printed reference resource in Chaucer lexicography. It was followed by a remarkable electronic resource *eChaucer in the 21 c.*¹, which offered international users along with full concordance (registering every quote from G. Chaucer's works), comprehensive comments and guides on the writer's inner world and cultural life of the English society of his time. This reference resource highly contributed to the development of cyber author lexicography of the 21st c. (Solnishkina, Gatiyatullina, 2020, pp. 132–160).

1.2. Shakespeare's Dictionaries

The wide range of lexical reference and rhetorical guidance is especially rich in Shakespeare lexicography. W. Shakespeare's reference books date back to the 18th c. They also began from concordances to the complete works of the outstanding writer, who became famous in English and other societies, contributing to the transmission of English literature, theatre and art into other societies. W. Shakespeare is on the world stage. His plays and sonnets are translated into many languages, and the appearance of bilingual English-German, English-Italian, English-Japanese and English-Russian Shakespeare dictionaries played an important role in the lexicographic interpretation of his masterpieces. Shakespeare dictionaries today comprise the biggest group in the world, author lexicography with more than one hundred titles (Karpova, 2010, pp. 158–178).

Various scholars studied W. Shakespeare's vocabulary for many centuries in different countries, and the dramatist's scholarship is enormous. According to B. Bryson's survey, W. Shakespeare left us 884, 647 words, which have been used with the following frequency: love 2259 times, bloody – 226, hate – 183, damned – 105, etc. (Bryson, 2008, p. 19). David Crystal says that Shakespeare introduced into the English language 1,700 words and collocations: even-handed, far-off, moonbeam, schooldays, laughing yourself into stitches, setting your teeth on edge, not sleeping a wink, etc. (Crystal and Crystal, 2002, p. 10).

The so-called Old Shakespeare Concordances had a subjective selection of words and quotations from Shakespeare's plays, the most famous concordance compiled by a librarian and indexer, Samuel Ayscough. The first edition of his concordance titled *An Index to the Remarkable Passages and Words Made Use of by Shakespeare; Calculated to Point Out the Different Meanings to Which the Words are Applied* was a handwritten masterpiece of early English lexicography and contained

selected quotations from Shakespeare's plays with their locations in the original texts (Ayscough, 1790). Another remarkable reference book *The Complete Concordance to Shakespeare* (Clark, 1845), which appeared in the 19th c., opened the new trend of registrative concordances and glossaries to W. Shakespeare, fixing every quotation from the playwright's works.

The most fruitful period in Shakespeare's lexicography refers to the 20th c. when first lexicons (explanatory dictionaries) were published. Alexander Schmidt's *Shakespeare Lexicon and Quotation Dictionary* printed *Dictionary*²: now available on the Internet, was aimed to reflect the language of Elizabethan époque. While C. T. Onions, the author of the dictionary *A Shakespeare Glossary*³: tried to show the individual peculiarities of W. Shakespeare's language. He was the first in English author lexicography, who introduced into dictionary microstructure the new system of special labels, underlying the dramatist's language and typical style features: first in Shakespeare, Shakespeare unique use, pre-Elizabethan use and the like.

The modern scene of Shakespeare lexicography includes the following types of printed and online reference resources to the plays and sonnets:

- glossaries of hard words, which cause difficulties with modern users (Crystal, Crystal, 2002; Schumacher 2004);
- dictionaries of terms from different subject areas: theatre, military and naval actions, religion, economics, politics and society, medicine, etc. (Ivic, 2017; Clark, 2018);
- dictionaries of erotic words (Rubinstein, 2003);
- dictionaries of Shakespeare's quotations and proverbs (Dent, 1981);
- Shakespeare's non-lexicographic works (Karpova, 2010, pp. 158–178).

1.3 Milton's Dictionaries

John Milton, a famous English poet of the 17th c., wrote in three languages: Latin, Italian and English, which should be mentioned in English author lexicography collection and G. Chaucer and W. Shakespeare. His poetry attracted different international lexicographers, who compiled various reference books to the poet's works. Among them, we find concordances, created mainly in the 19th c., for example, *A Complete Concordance to the Poetical Works of Milton* (Lushington, 1857) and *A Concordance to the Poetical Works of John Milton* (Bradshaw, 2019). The last one, first published in 1894, was recently transferred into the digital form due to the new trend in English national lexicography when many dictionaries appeared in Internet versions. For example, *A Complete Concordance to the Poetical Works of John Milton* (Cleveland, 2012), also published in 1854, nowadays has a digital version and, thus, easy access of modern readers.

These concordances include all of J. Milton's poems (excluding *the Psalms* and translations in the prose works), and all of the words are registered in their macrostructure with the exception of some pronouns, conjunctions, adverbs and prepositions. Concordances have similar dictionary architecture: *Introduction*, *A to Z corpus* and several *Appendices*. The back matter contains proper names, toponyms and foreign words from J. Milton's poetry and prose. It is aimed at the needs of J. Milton's scholars, grammarians, philologists and greatly contributes to a better understanding of English national identity.

It is necessary to note that despite a big chronological gap between centuries, there appeared many new lexicographic reference resources to J. Milton's works in the 20th and 21st cc. Moreover, the 20th c. may be called the climax of J. Milton's dictionary-making, when several titles appeared in different countries of the world: *Concordance of the Latin, Greek and Italian Poems of J. Milton* (Cooper, 1923), *A Concordance to Milton's English Poetry* (Ingram, Swaim, 1972) and *A Concordance to John Milton's Paradise Lost* in two volumes (Floren, 1992).

The majority of J. Milton's dictionaries was compiled using new informational technologies, which made it possible to enrich their microstructure with many important elements: full illustrative examples with exact location in the source text; etymological, statistic chronological, regional labels accompanying the headwords and so on. Among them, we should mention two more lexicons of great cultural value: *A Milton Dictionary* (Le Comte, 1961) and *A Geographical Dictionary of Milton* (Gilbert, 1919), which explained life and society in England of the 17th c. through detailed commentaries and graphic illustrations of cultural artefacts and geographical places.

Undoubtedly, J. Milton's unique texts as viewed lexicographically (through various types of dictionaries) are worth deep and thorough research, which will contribute to a better understanding of English mentality and way of life.

2. Encyclopedic Author Dictionaries

2.1. Milton's Dictionaries Encyclopedias, Guides and Companions

Encyclopedic dictionaries to famous English writers' works appeared as an answer to users' needs and demands to learn more about their time, life, culture, ideas and activities, contemporaries, plots of creative works, and other facts, etc. Thomas Hardy, Agatha Christie and William Shakespeare are in the centre of authors' encyclopedias, guides, companions, dictionaries of characters and place names, published since the 19 c. up to now.

One of the most typical encyclopedic dictionaries is under the title *A Thomas Hardy Dictionary. With Maps and a Chronology* (Toye, 1980) represent a vast list of references, reflecting cultural life, traditions, and national heritage of Great Britain through great English writer's inner world. Comprehensive volumes of G. Chaucer's and George G. Byron's

cultural treasury in the encyclopedic reference books *A Companion to Chaucer* (Brown, 2002) and *The Palgrave Literary Dictionary of Byron* (Garrett, 2010) highly contributed to the extra-linguistic description of society and identity in Great Britain.

The importance of author encyclopedias for today's readers is very vivid, for example, in *The Dickens Dictionary: An A-Z of Britain's Greatest Novelist*, compiled by a Victorian literature expert, John Sutherland (Sutherland, 2012). There are thousands of old and new fans of Ch. Dickens, who enjoy his fictional world, inventive plots of the novels, discover the novelist's London, pubs, punishment, love, madness, creating a unique personal guide to Ch. Dickens's great wordplay.

In its turn, the recently published encyclopedia *The Shakespeare Book: Big Ideas Simply Explained* (Wells, 2015) is one of the best samples of writer's encyclopedias. Its author is an outstanding Shakespeare's scholar, Stanley Wells, whose bibliography is rich in many dictionaries and research papers on the dramatists' linguistic and cultural heritage. The book has clear metalanguage, is packed with infographics, rich full-colour photography, images, idea webs, timelines, quotes, explanations of plots, etc. This reference book gives a detailed introduction to Shakespeare's life and times, helping modern readers understand the historical and cultural context of the dramatist's plays and sonnets.

With the appearance of new screen versions and Internet video in the new millennium, we witness the young audience's great interest in John R. R. Tolkien's works. Modern lexicographers immediately fulfilled international users' demands to create different reference resource for his works. Thus, the whole range of reference books appeared, among them: *A Dictionary of Tolkien* (Day, 2013) and *An Encyclopedia of Tolkien: The History and Mythology That Inspired Tolkien's World* (Day, 2019). In these volumes, J. R. R. Tolkien's scholar David Day presents several decades of research and writing on the lands and inhabitants of Middle-earth. A-to-Z dictionary corpus includes battles, history, beasts, heroes, creatures of J. R. R. Tolkien's stories. This valuable volume on the writer's world and heritage also contains a detailed *Appendix* of three primary legends, which served as sources for J. R. R. Tolkien's creations and 200 wonderful graphic illustrations.

2.2 Authors' Onomasticons

All types of proper names (mainly personal and toponyms), found in the English writers' works, refer to another important group of encyclopedic author dictionaries called *onomasticons*. They combine different reference books, called either *dictionaries of characters and place names* or *Who is who in...* first appeared in the 18 c., and many reliable authors' onomasticons were revised and republished several times, like *Tennyson Dictionary; the Characters and Place-names Contained in the Poetical and Dramatic Works of the Poet* (Baker, Hist, 2012). This book was originally published in 1923 and presented an important historical work,

maintaining the same format as the original edition. It provides modern users with quick access to the best historic reprints.

Shakespeare's onomasticon called *A Dictionary of Who, What, and Where in Shakespeare* (Clark, 2015) gives a quick but deep reference, for it is created by an outstanding Shakespeare scholar, who is famous for the best dictionaries to the playwright's works. In Shakespeare's context and time, Sandra Clark provides the plots and characters, supplies the most useful information about the source texts (which Shakespeare used), explains the origin of proper and geographical names, found in his plays. These features make this reference book attractive either for Shakespeare lovers or those new to his world.

The range of onomasticons of *Who is who* type is not so informative as *dictionaries of characters and place names*. They offer quick and *laconic* reference to the main characters from the writers' works with their location in the original text. Sometimes brief cultural comments are provided, as in these reference books: *Who's Who in Thomas Hardy* (Leeming, 1975), *Who's Who in Thomas Hardy* (Toye, 1980) and *The Agatha Christie Who's Who* (Pinion, 1989).

A new genre of writers' encyclopedic reference books appeared recently, registering and describing names of producers, actors and actresses from theatre and screen productions of Shakespeare's plays, for example, *Shakespeare's Theatre. A Dictionary of His Stage Context* (Richmond, 2003). Nowadays, a very interesting and innovative onomasticon *Shakespeare: Actors and Audiences* (Banks, 2018) was added to this dramatic theatre reference range. It highlights the relationship between actors and audiences, exploring the interplay that makes each performance unique. The dictionary provides exciting facts about theatre in Shakespeare's time. Moreover, for the first time in Shakespeare's scholarship, this volume describes *audiences* who attended his plays, thus putting people and their mentality and emotions at the centre of understanding Shakespeare in performance atmosphere.

This innovative dictionary reflects the new trends in modern English lexicography, considering old and new research in the cultural heritage of Great Britain. Part I offers readers a detailed overview of the best modern audience research, gives us a critical framework for the interviews and testimony of leading actors, theatre-makers, audience members. Part II provides a fascinating insight into the English theatrical traditions, performances, and the specific relationship between actor and audience that lies in theatre-making.

It was followed by other numerous modern guides on Shakespeare's theatre, where lexicographers concentrated their attention on women characters: *Shakespeare's Demonology: A Dictionary* (Gibson, Ezra, 2014) and *Women in Shakespeare: A Dictionary* (Findlay, 2010). The last one is a comprehensive reference book examining the language employed by the outstanding dramatist to represent women in the full range of his poetry and plays. It describes women's role within the Shakespearean drama, their representations on the stage and their place in Shakespeare's personal and professional lives.

These volumes belong to the famous *Arden Shakespeare Dictionaries series*, which publishes terminological Shakespeare dictionaries, having extremely valuable data on Shakespeare's words and show the authenticity of his époque in music, clothes, food, and so on (Karpova, 2018, pp. 9–16).

In the new millennium English author' encyclopedic reference resources are often presented online, for example, *Open Source Shakespeare* ⁴, *The Burns Encyclopedia online* ⁵, and *A Tolkien Dictionary* ⁶. Such cyber references offer us a rich variety of materials, combining a linguistic and cultural overview of the writers' creative world and his époque. Today they became the most frequently demanded information tools, because they provide rich graphic, music and video illustrations of cultural and linguistic facts, making them more and more attractive for international users (students, translators, scholars).

Conclusion

The practical experience developed today close contacts with other branches of knowledge: culture, history, cinema, theatre, country studies and acquired interdisciplinary character. The problems of selection and lexicographic description of writers' vocabulary layers (proper names, quotations, proverbs, idioms, terms) are involved in the sphere of professional and volunteer and collaborative lexicographical projects.

Author lexicography, having at its disposal a vast repertoire of three hundred linguistic and encyclopedic dictionaries for general and special purposes to eighty prominent writers' creative works, belonging to different historical periods, is a significant contribution to the world and English national heritage. Dictionaries to G. Chaucer, W. Shakespeare, J. Milton, Ch. Dickens, J. Austin, A. Tennyson, and many other writers offer modern users valuable linguistic facts and present unique encyclopedic information on cultural code of British society.

Looking into the digital future of lexicography, it can be said that despite the growing interest in online reference resources and the Internet, English author dictionaries would also survive in a printed format due to their centuries-old experience. As most heritage reference books are kept at the *Rare Books Departments* of international libraries, which are priceless archives of national cultural heritage, many readers will choose printed volumes. New achievements in heritage lexicography will depend on the accumulation of writers' dictionaries data in many countries and their systematic analysis, where English author lexicography occupies an important place. Sources

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Notes

- 1 <http://www.umm.maine.edu/faculty/necastro/chaucer/concordance>

- 2 <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.03.0079&redirect=true>
- 3 <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.03.0068:entry=free1>
- 4 <http://www.opensourceshakespeare.org/>
- 5 <http://www.robertburns.org/encyclopedia/>
- 6 http://www.quicksilver899.com/Tolkien/Tolkien_Dictionary.html/