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FABULOUS TOPONYMS IN BRITISH AND ARMENIAN LITERATURE: A STUDY OF REFERENCE

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Abstract: *Toponyms have long been a central focus of scholarly inquiry. Toponymy, the study of place names, is an interdisciplinary academic field. Several disciplines—including Linguistics, History, Geography, Ethnology, and Archaeology—examine these lexical units, each with its own specific interests. This study explores the linguistic mechanisms of reference employed in British and Armenian fabulous toponyms, namely the invented place names that populate the mythic or fantasy landscapes depicted in British and Armenian literature. By analysing examples such as Hogwarts, Narnia, Neverland, and Camelot, the article investigates how these fictional toponyms derive meaning through multiple referential layers. Three primary dimensions of reference are identified: intra-textual, pertaining to the internal structure of the fictional universe; inter-textual, relating to resonance with antecedent literary traditions and the real world; and real-world, involving references to geographical, cultural, and linguistic realities beyond the textual domain. The fundamental question remains: "How do we refer to something that does not exist in reality?"*

Keywords: *toponymy, imaginary toponyms, reference, inter-textual reference, intra-textual reference, real-world reference*

Introduction

Reference concerns the relation between words and extra-linguistic reality, that is, what words stand for or refer to in the outside world or the universe of discourse. This is how Wales understands reference in philosophy and semantics (Wales, Katie, 1989).

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The traditional approach to reference in semantics holds that reference is a relationship between expressions in a text and entities in the world, and that co-reference is a relationship between expressions in different parts of a text (Brown & Yule, 1983, p. 204).

Accordingly, the referent of the word 'chair' is the piece of furniture used for sitting. In linguistics, care is usually taken to distinguish knowledge of the world from knowledge of language: the extra-linguistic notion of reference is contrasted with the intra-linguistic idea of sense, a property arising from the meaning relations between lexical items and sentences (Crystal, 1985, p. 391).

In grammar and text linguistics, reference is used in a broader sense to denote any form of designation, both textual and situational. In semantics, it is recognized that not all elements of a language refer to specific objects in the external world. The majority of these elements are grammatical or function words (prepositions, conjunctions, determiners, and pronouns). Pronouns, however, are a class of words whose semantic reference varies from situation to situation. In a text, the terms reference and refer are convenient for describing the function of words such as pronouns and determiners in designating a noun phrase they identify within the immediate co-text (Wales, 1989, p. 397).

Morley (Morley, 1985, p. 76) sees reference as the meaning relationship linking the full lexical expression of an entity or circumstance to the pro-form or substitute to which it refers. Lyons (Lyons, 1968, p. 404) states that "*the relationship which holds between words and things is the relationship of reference: words refer to things*". In a more recent statement on the nature of reference, Lyons points out that *"it is the speaker who refers (by using some appropriate expression); he invites the expression with reference by the act of referring"* (Lyons, 1977, p. 177).

Methodology

The present study adopts a qualitative research approach to investigate the concept of reference in British and Armenian fabulous toponyms. The research material comprises imaginary geographical names identified in selected British and Armenian literary works. The selection of examples is based on their relevance to the study of fictional place naming and their potential to illustrate different dimensions of reference. Particular attention is paid to the distinction between actual geographical names, which denote identifiable geographical entities, and fabulous toponyms, which designate imaginary places within fictional worlds. *Descriptive, semantic, contextual* and *comparative* methods of analysis are applied.

The *descriptive* method is employed to identify and classify fabulous toponyms occurring in the selected literary works, taking into consideration their linguistic and structural characteristics. *Semantic* analysis is applied to examine the lexical meanings, connotations, and associations conveyed by these names. This approach makes it possible to determine the extent to which the linguistic components of fabulous toponyms contribute to the construction and interpretation of imaginary geographical spaces. Together, these methods establish the linguistic and semantic characteristics of the selected material and provide a foundation for further investigation of its referential properties.

Contextual analysis is employed to examine fabulous toponyms within their respective literary and narrative environments. Since imaginary geographical names do not necessarily correspond to locations in the actual world, their interpretation largely depends on the fictional contexts in which they occur. This method helps establish how such names acquire identifiable referents through narrative descriptions, character interactions, and the internal organization of fictional settings. It therefore demonstrates the role of literary context in establishing and maintaining reference within imaginary worlds.

The *comparative* method is applied to identify similarities and differences between fabulous toponyms found in British and Armenian literary traditions. The comparison focuses on their naming patterns, semantic characteristics, cultural and linguistic associations, and referential functions. This approach makes it possible to examine whether the two literary traditions employ comparable mechanisms in the creation and interpretation of imaginary geographical names, while also identifying features shaped by their respective linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

Discussion: Reference and Fiction

Bertrand Russell was the first to propose a descriptive theory of names, which held that a proper name refers not to a referent but to a set of true propositions that uniquely describe it. Rejecting descriptivism, Saul Kripke and Keith Donnellan advanced causal-historical theories of reference, which hold that names are associated with individual referents because societies that give a specific name to its referent in a naming process fix the value of the name to the particular referent within that community.

Today, however, the most widely accepted theory is the direct reference theory, which holds that proper names refer to their referents without conveying any additional information, connotations, or other meanings.

In his "Sense and Reference", Frege states that it is the meaning or concept associated with a word, phrase, or sentence that determines its reference. Reference, in turn, is the actual object or entity in the world that a word, phrase, or sentence refers to. According to Frege, understanding the sense of an expression requires grasping its reference (Frege, 1948).

Russell's theory of descriptions aimed to analyze definite descriptions in a way that avoided the problems associated with Frege's sense-reference distinction. According to him, definite descriptions, and even some proper names, should be understood as shorthand for a set of properties or characteristics. Russell acknowledged Frege's distinction between sense and reference, but he didn't always find it necessary to maintain it. He argued that in some cases, particularly with logically proper names, the sense and reference collapse into one another. In other words, a name directly refers to an object without an intermediary sense.

In essence, Russell's approach was to analyze language in a way that clarified how it refers to the world, while also acknowledging the complexities of meaning and reference that Frege had highlighted.

Kripke, on the other hand, developed his work Naming and Necessity, focusing on the causal theory of reference. He proposes that a proper name's referent is determined by a causal chain of communication, rather than by descriptions associated with the name. This view clearly contradicts the descriptive theory. Proper names, according to Kripke, are rigid designators. This means they refer to the same object across all possible worlds in which that object exists, regardless of whether other objects in those worlds share similar properties. For a name to be successfully transmitted through the causal chain, each speaker in the chain must intend to use the name to refer to the same object as the person from whom they learned it.

Kripke's theory primarily emphasizes the referential aspect of names rather than their semantic content. He maintains that while names possess a referent, they are not invariably linked to a particular meaning or description. This framework is effective when discussing personal names or, occasionally, real place names. However, when the focus shifts to fictional place names—the central subject of our investigation—the theory is fundamentally challenged and operates counter to expectation.

A New Approach to the Act of Referring (Theoretical Framework)

Based on this assumption, one can conclude that a referent is the concrete object or concept designated by a word or expression. A referent is an object, action, state,

relationship or attribute within the referential realm. The referential realm is a conceptual or ontological domain in which signs, symbols or linguistic expressions derive meaning by pointing to entities or ideas beyond themselves. It is the structured space of reference where meaning is established through the relationship between signs and their referents.

In semiotics and the philosophy of language, a referential realm can be understood as a system in which meaning is determined either by external correspondence (e.g., a word referring to an object in the real world) or by internal coherence (e.g., symbols referring to other symbols within a closed system, as in mathematics or in fictional narratives). The referential realm may be treated as an objective reality independent of cognition, as a social construct shaped by discourse, or as a mental framework arising from interpretive acts.

However, our research aims to examine the concept of reference from another perspective: namely, what we call reference in the study of toponymy. The focus is not on actual toponyms, that is, distinct place names designating specific geographical entities, but rather on the concept of reference as applied to imaginary toponyms. It aims to demonstrate that a reference can be indicated even in the absence of an objective referent in objective reality. That is, the speaker refers to something that lacks an existing referent. The fundamental question is "*How can imaginary toponyms refer if their referents don't exist*?"

The role of place names in fiction is crucial for shaping the reader's perception of a fictional world. These names define the cultural and historical background of a setting. They can suggest the geography, climate or political nature of a location. An example of this is Winterfell (A Song of Ice and Fire), which immediately creates an atmosphere of cold and defensiveness. This is what led us to agree with Kripke's theory of proper names, as outlined above. When studying reference in toponymy, Descriptive and Causal Theories are mostly to be supported. Let's not forget that we are speaking about toponyms, that is, place names which can be affected by different factors: location, nature, peculiarities, population, climate, etc. These are all causal factors that can be decisive in the choice of a place name, be it real or unreal.

Although it is out of context, there is relevance of discussing a few words about proper names of individuals. As it has already been mentioned above, Russell holds that a word's referent is the word itself and that it doesn't require any intermediary connotations. In my view, this is true when proper names of people are considered. Suppose a child is born and is given a name. Any associations, resemblance, or other factors are never taken into consideration. There is a bare name and there is a

referent. No any other intermediary is implied. Different individuals can have the same name but each is the bearer of his own name.

In the same context, I would like to quote Kripke's view that a proper name's referent is determined by a causal chain of communication, rather than by descriptions. This is somewhat realistic, in the sense that a proper name can be given according to a family's historical traditions. In Armenia, for example, it is traditional to name a newborn after the grandfather. But this doesn't work in toponymy.

When discussing imaginary toponyms, it is highly relevant to mention Umberto Eco's fascinating book, "The Book of Legendary Lands". From the epic poets of antiquity to contemporary science fiction writers, from the authors of the Holy Scriptures to modern fairy tales, authors have created imaginary and mythical lands that elicit excitement, amusement, fear, and other emotions that provoke curiosity. As Umberto Eco observes, we know everything about the universe of Greek mythology: Olympus, the rivers and lakes, forests, and the sea. Yet the Greek imagination continually transformed every aspect of the world into a legendary place. The examples are many and diverse. It envisages Olympus inhabited by the gods, stretches of water and mountains populated by nymphs. Hence, the entire universe has the potential to inspire research concerning legendary lands. In his publication, Umberto Eco examines the locations visited by Ulysses. Nevertheless, numerous historical, fictional, and legendary geographical sites continue to be topics of debate, particularly regarding their existence and, if existent, their precise locations.

After Ulysses' wanderings in "made-out" reality, there follows another contradictory phenomenon of "legendary reality" origin: the question of the world's seven wonders existence or non-existence. This is what is found particularly timely to consider: the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, the Colossus of Rhodes, the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus, the Temple of Artemis, the Lighthouse of Alexandria, the Statue of Zeus at Olympia, the Work of Phidias, and the Great Pyramids of Giza. The only surviving wonder is the Great Pyramid of Cheops.

Can we be certain that the most famous Temple of Artemis existed and that a certain Herostratus set it on fire to gain eternal fame? No one can state this for sure. Of all these, the only survivor is the Great Pyramid of Cheops, which we all admire today. How else could one speak about mysterious locations without casting a glance at the Orient? From antiquity to the Middle Ages, the wonders of the Orient became a literary genre that endured successive geographical discoveries. Wandering in the Orient, he presents not only the fantastic lands that Alexander the Great had seen but also birds with lettuce-leaf wings, Minotaurs, and flea-archers

the size of twelve elephants. All the various tales about Alexander gave rise to a subgenre of Oriental mirabilia, consisting of lists or descriptions of the monsters that could be encountered there.

One of the mythical lands of the Orient is the Earthly Paradise. According to the Bible, this is the land where Adam and Eve enjoyed their heavenly life and from which they were exiled after committing the original sin. To summarize the idea of Eden, he explains that, since everyday reality is cruel and brutal, Eden brings together the dreams of a happy land to which men once belonged and may one day return. As Arturo Graf (Arturo Graf, 1892-1893) states in his classic study of the Earthly Paradise, some scholars even suggested that the Eden myth echoed "the hazy memory of an ancient social condition, before the establishment of land ownership". Thus, the desire for a new land, superior to the one people were condemned to inhabit, gave rise to another legend: the secular Eden, El Dorado.

Having discussed the book containing thousands of invented or possibly invented toponyms, remarks will be complimented with a wonderful encyclopedia of imaginary things, namely the Codex Seraphinianus. Written by Italian architect and designer Luigi Serafini, it is an elaborate encyclopedia of imaginary objects and creatures. The most interesting aspect is that the book was not written in ordinary language, but rather in an unintelligible alphabet that evolved into a constructed language, or conlang. At first sight, the book appears to be the most incomprehensible edition one could ever encounter, from its language to its illustrations. However, this non-existent universe is remarkably similar to ours. Fictional names that follow consistent linguistic and cultural patterns make the world feel authentic. Even entirely made-up names should feel plausible within their setting. In The Lord of the Rings, Minas Tirith and Minas Morgul share a consistent Elvish-based structure, reinforcing the world's depth.

Names can evoke emotions and set the tone for the story. A notable example is Neverland (from Peter Pan), which conveys a sense of whimsy and eternal childhood. In contrast, specific place names can hold symbolic or thematic significance. For example, *The Shire* (The Lord of the Rings) represents an idyllic, untouched homeland worth protecting.

When analyzing linguistic reference in non-existent toponyms, one should pay attention to how fictional place names are generated from real-world languages, phonetic patterns, and naming conventions. In this regard, etymological analysis should be applied. Let us take the example of Eldorado and break the word into possible affixes and roots, it shows that it resembles words in a real language, suggesting age or legendary status.

Another approach to studying a toponym is to examine its phonetic pattern and sound symbolism. It is a fact that sounds do shape perception. Hard consonants (K, G, T) may evoke feelings of strength, fear, stress, etc., while soft consonants (L, M, N) can create a peaceful tone.

Results: Classification of Toponyms According to the Types of Reference

In this section, imaginary place names will be classified by reference type. We distinguish among *internal (intra-textual) references, inter-textual references*, and *real-world references*.

Internal references concern how toponyms appear and function within the fictional world. Imaginary toponyms (place names in fictional or created settings) that exhibit internal reference are names that refer to aspects of the place itself—such as its characteristics, history, people, geography, or symbolic meaning. These names are not merely decorative; they help world-build by embedding context, culture, or function within the name.

A speaking example of this is Tolkien's Mordor (The Lord of the Rings). In Tolkien's Middle-earth, Mordor is a dark and desolate land ruled by the Dark Lord Sauron. The name "Mordor" is derived from the Black Speech of Mordor, meaning "Black Land", which serves as an internal reference to its ominous and oppressive nature. This internal reference reinforces the land's association with evil and corruption.

The following example, Emerald City (The Wonderful Wizard of Oz), speaks much about the nature of the city. The word "emerald" refers to the green hue in the story, associated with the characters' perception through green glasses. The next descriptive toponym, one that speaks much about itself, is Carland. It is a name with English and Irish roots, generally meaning rocky land, and it appears in the English folk tale The Buried Moon.

This group can also include another toponym that provides information about the place it refers to. That is Neverland in Peter Pan's story. It embodies the magic of remaining forever young, i.e., here, children never grow old. Another example of intra-textual reference is the name of the school founded by J. K. Rowling in the Harry Potter series. According to various sources, Hogwarts, the magic school for young wizards, has an out-of–universe origin. "Hogwarts" is a blend of "hog" and "wart," referencing a plant known as hogwart, which adds a layer of botanical realism to the magical setting. Since we have classified Hogwarts within this group, let us consider another toponym from the Harry Potter universe. Specifically, the name of a magical village called Hogsmeade, which is "factually"

located in the Scottish Highlands. Considering its origin, an analogous explanation can be applied in the analysis of this toponym. According to tradition, it was established in the tenth or eleventh century, coinciding with the founding of Hogwarts University. Instances of this category are numerous and diverse.

An *inter-textual* reference in the study of imaginary toponyms refers to the way fictional place names evoke or directly borrow meaning or connotation from other texts — whether fictional, historical, mythological, or cultural. In this respect, a term particularly notable for its influence is Julia Kristeva's, which posits that texts are not isolated creations but are shaped by a network of other texts (Julia Kristeva, 1966). In the context of imaginary toponyms, *inter-textual references* serve several purposes.

1. They can evoke known narratives or worlds. Sometimes these toponyms are designed to evoke well-known places from other works, subtly linking one fictional world to another. For example, J.K. Rowling's Azkaban phonetically and thematically recalls Alcatraz (a real-world prison island) while hinting at the Persian word "abad" (a suffix meaning place), linking it to older linguistic traditions.

   Another world-evoking toponym is Eldorado, used by Poe, Voltaire, and some other modern fantasy writers. It originally emerged in a Spanish legend, pointing to a mythical city of gold. Later, it appears as a symbolic toponym in literature to denote utopia or illusion. In some other cases, they can be used for *genre signposting*. In other words, a toponym may carry cues that situate it within a particular literary or genre tradition. A name like *"Rohan"* in Tolkien's work may evoke associations with Scandinavian or Anglo-Saxon roots, echoing epic traditions and heroism, and inviting comparison with historical or mythological geographies.
2. Sometimes these references create an *allusive layering*. These toponyms embed references to earlier works, deepening meaning for readers who catch them. In Ursula K. Le Guin's *Earthsea*, names carry etymological weight and magical power, echoing not only the Bible and classical mythology but also linguistic theories from Tolkien or anthropological studies—creating inter-textual resonance.
3. *Parody or Subversion*. Authors might create toponyms that mock, invert, or comment on established fictional or real places. Pratchett's *"Ankh-Morpork"* parodies the classic urban-fantasy city and offers inter-textual nods to London, Rome, and other cultural metropolises.

   Another example of subversion is Camelot, the legendary castle associated with King Arthur. Initially, it appears in the Lancelot-Grail cycles. Later, it

becomes the symbol of the Arthurian kingdom. The origin of the word is unclear. As for its geography, medieval texts place it somewhere in Great Britain.

4. Toponyms can carry inter-textual weight through their linguistic construction alone. Tolkien, a philologist, coined names such as *"Minas Tirith"* and *"Mordor"* using invented languages rooted in authentic linguistic traditions, thereby creating layers of allusion that enrich the mythological depth of Middle-earth.

This category may include the Armenian toponym Չինիմաչին (Chinimachin). Initially, this toponym was used as Չինումաչինա (Chinumachin) in Golden Fish (Ոսկե Ձկնիկ). Afterwards, it appeared in another fairy tale (Խոզապած) as Չինիմաչին (Chinimachin).

In the study of imaginary toponyms, a *real-world reference* is how fictional place names (toponyms) draw on or allude to actual geographical locations, historical events, cultural concepts, or linguistic elements. These references ground the fictional world in a semblance of reality, enhancing its believability and resonance with readers. Imaginary toponyms often draw on the real world to create names that are both plausible and meaningful. One example is *"Gondor"* from J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*. The name "Gondor" is derived from Tolkien's constructed Elvish languages but echoes the structure and resonance of real-world place names, lending it a sense of authenticity.

Another example of this is *"Narnia"* in C.S. Lewis's The Chronicles of Narnia. The name "Narnia" is inspired by the ancient city of Narnia in Italy, grounding the fictional world in a real historical context. Another interesting toponym, Shangri-La, can also be classified here. It was used by the British author James Hilton in his novel Lost Horizon. In this novel, the people living there are almost immortal and age very slowly, living for hundreds of years. From this novel, Shangri-La has become synonymous with paradise, a happy land isolated from the world. In addition to its fictional character, Shangri-La is applicable in the real world. It is an existing village in Yunnan, China. What makes it more interesting is that, in this case, it is not fiction that took the toponym from reality. Still, reality itself appropriated the toponym from fiction, as the Chinese city was named after the mythical land. Examples of real-world references in both English and Armenian tales are numerous. Examples include Ուռումը (Urum) – an archaic form of Հռոմ (Rome) that evokes a sense of authenticity and accuracy; Ստամբոլ (Stambol), the transformed version of Istanbul; Սպահան (Spahan), another name for Isfahan (the third-largest city in Iran); Մասսա սար, which refers to Mount Masis;

Իգդիր (Igdir), a city in eastern Turkey, within the territory of Eastern Armenia and many others.

Conclusion

The examination of reference mechanisms in fabulous toponyms demonstrates that invented place names function as complex semiotic devices that enrich fictional worlds.

In conclusion, the analysis demonstrates that the reference of fabulous toponyms cannot be explained solely in terms of their correspondence to geographical entities in the actual world. Although names such as *Wonderland* and *Narnia* lack actual-world geographical referents, they acquire identifiable meanings within their respective fictional universes. Their referential functions can be examined through three interconnected dimensions: intra-textual reference, which establishes the identity of a place within the fictional narrative; inter-textual reference, which connects it with literary traditions, myths, and other narratives; and real-world reference, which reveals its associations with actual geographical, cultural, and linguistic realities. These dimensions demonstrate that fabulous toponyms operate across the boundaries of fiction and reality, enabling readers to identify imaginary places and interpret their significance.

Thus, the answer to the central question of how language refers to something that does not exist in physical reality lies in the distinction between actual-world existence and referential identification within a fictional framework. Fabulous toponyms demonstrate that a name can perform a meaningful referential function without designating an actual geographical location.

The study of reference in fabulous toponyms confirms the central role of naming in the construction of fictional realities. Understanding how these names operate not only illuminates the poetics of world-building but also reveals broader cognitive and cultural processes through which readers interpret and relate to imaginary spaces. To sum up, one more interesting point is to be noted. Since this research is devoted to the analysis of two national folk tales, British and Armenian, an interesting phenomenon has been observed: the English are more inclined to use toponyms than the Armenians. When a British fairy tale opens, it is normally followed by a description of the setting or the toponym itself. Armenian fairy tales are more inclined to use descriptive or associative words rather than naming the location - աղբրի կշտին, ձառի տակին, Սև դևի սահմանը, թագավորի ամարաթները, ուրիշ քաղաք, ջրի ղրաղ, etc.

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Ն. Դավթյան – *Մտացածին տեղանունների վերաբերությունը բրիտանական և հայկական գրականության մեջ.* – Տեղանունները վաղուց ի վեր հանդիսանում են գիտական ուսումնասիրության կարևորագույն օբյեկտներից մեկը։ Տեղանվանագիտությունը՝ որպես տեղանունների ուսումնասիրությամբ զբաղվող գիտակարգ,

ունի միջառարկայական բնույթ: Մի շարք գիտություններ, այդ թվում՝ լեզվաբանությունը, պատմությունը, աշխարհագրությունը, ազգագրությունը և հնագիտությունը, ուսումնասիրում են այս բառային միավորները՝ յուրաքանչյուրն իր առանձնահատուկ գիտական հետաքրքրությունների շրջանակում:

Սույն հետազոտությունն ուսումնասիրում է վերաբերության լեզվական մեխանիզմները բրիտանական և հայկական մտացածին տեղանուններում: Խոսքը հորինված տեղանունների մասին է, որոնք բրիտանական, հայկական և առհասարակ առասպելական կամ ֆանտաստիկ աշխարհների անբաժանելի մասն են կազմում գրականության մեջ: Hogwarts, Narnia, Neverland և Camelot տեղանունների օրինակների վերլուծության միջոցով հոդվածում ուսումնասիրվում է, թե ինչպես են այս հորինված տեղանունները իմաստ ձեռք բերում վերաբերության տարբեր շերտերում:

Ուսումնասիրության շրջանակում առանձնացվում են վերաբերության երեք հիմնական տեսակներ՝ ներտեքստային, որը վերաբերում է մտացածին աշխարհի ներքին կառուցվածքին, միջտեքստային, որը կապված է նախորդ գրական ավանդույթների և իրական աշխարհի հետ ունեցած կապերի հետ, և իրական՝ տեքստից դուրս աշխարհագրական, մշակութային և լեզվական իրողությունների վերաբերությունը: Ուսումնասիրության հիմնարար հարցն է՝ «Ինչպե՞ս կարելի է ցույց տալ վերաբերություն մի բանի, որն իրականում գոյություն չունի»:

Բանալի բառեր՝ *տեղանվանագիտություն, երևակայական տեղանուններ, վերաբերություն, միջտեքստային վերաբերություն, ներտեքստային վերաբերություն, վերաբերություն դեպի իրական աշխարհին*

Н. Давтян – *Воображаемые топонимы в британской и армянской литературе: исследование референции*. – Топонимы уже давно являются одним из центральных объектов научного исследования. Топонимия, представляющая собой изучение географических названий, является междисциплинарной научной областью. Несколько дисциплин, включая лингвистику, историю, географию, этнологию и археологию, исследуют эти лексические единицы, каждая в соответствии со своими специфическими научными интересами.

В настоящем исследовании рассматриваются лингвистические механизмы референции, используемые в британских и армянских фантазийных топонимах, то есть вымышленных названиях мест, которые формируют мифические или фантастические пространства, изображённые в британской и армянской литературе. Посредством анализа таких примеров, как Hogwarts, Narnia, Neverland и Camelot, в статье исследуется, каким образом данные фикциональные топонимы приобретают значение посредством нескольких референциальных уровней.

Выделяются три основных измерения референции: интратекстуальное, относящееся к внутренней структуре фикционального мира; интертекстуальное, связанное с отсылками к предшествующим литературным традициям и реальному миру; референция к реальному миру, предполагающая обращение к географическим, культурным и языковым реалиям, находящимся за пределами текста.

Таким образом, принципиальный вопрос заключается в следующем: «Как мы можем ссылаться на то, чего в действительности не существует?»

Ключевые слова: *топонимия, воображаемые топонимы, референция, интертекстуальная референция, интратекстуальная референция, референция к реальному миру*