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SCRIPTONYMS AND ADJACENT ONOMASTIC UNITS: CRITERIA FOR DISTINGUISHING THEM FROM PSEUDONYMS, CRYPTONYMS, PERIPHRASES AND EUPHEMISMS

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Abstract. The article offers a comparative analysis of the notion of the scriptonym and the onomastic units functionally close to it: the pseudonym, the cryptonym, the periphrasis and the euphemism. The analysis is based on four criteria: the motive of nomination, the relationship between the name and the author-subject, the pragmatic function in the text, and the effect produced in the mind of the recipient. Drawing on material from ancient pseudepigraphy (F. Jacquesson), Uzbek and Russian pseudonymy (S. Ibragimova), and name taboo and euphemism in Uzbek speech (A. Omonturdiev), the study substantiates the status of the scriptonym as an independent onomastic unit. It is concluded that while the cryptonym represents the zero degree of nomination, the pseudonym an author’s personal substitute name, and the euphemism a protective, taboo-driven substitution, the scriptonym is a conceptual sign that endows a nominal unit with an additional socio-spiritual load and enhances the discursive authority of the text.

Keywords: scriptonym, pseudonym, cryptonym, periphrasis, euphemism, pseudepigraph, nomination, name taboo, onomastics, discourse.

Introduction

In modern onomastics and text linguistics, nomination is interpreted as a complex, multi-layered process. A subject may change or conceal their real name for various reasons, or replace it with another nominal unit. Traditional linguistics describes these phenomena with the terms pseudonym, cryptonym, periphrasis and euphemism. However, each of these units has its own purpose of nomination and its own discursive function, and the status of the scriptonym as an independent onomastic unit cannot be substantiated without distinguishing them from one another.

The term “scriptonym” was introduced in Russian Germanic studies to denote units that name knowledge structures of the scenario (script) type. M.V. Khorokhordina studied scriptonyms as nominative units representing the knowledge of the German linguocultural community in the sphere of ritualized communication and divided them into primary and secondary types [Khorokhordina 2017: 5]. O.I. Bykova and M.V. Khorokhordina regarded scriptonyms as complex signs of culture and analysed their conceptual derivation [Bykova, Khorokhordina 2015]. In our approach, the notion of the scriptonym is interpreted more broadly: a scriptonym is a name that, relying on a “ready-made scenario” formed in the speaker’s cultural memory and in public consciousness, gives a nominal unit an additional social, spiritual or symbolic load.

The aim of this article is to identify the criteria that distinguish the scriptonym from adjacent units and to summarize them in the form of a comparative table.

Materials and Methods

The research material comprises examples of ancient and medieval pseudepigraphy [Jacquesson 2016], a corpus of Russian and Uzbek pseudonyms [Ibragimova 2023], taboos and euphemisms in Uzbek speech [Omonturdiev 2006], as well as theoretical views on the categorial status of the proper name [Rangel Vicente 2019; Kripke 1980]. Comparative-typological, onomasiological and pragmatic methods of analysis were applied. Each unit was described according to four criteria: 1) the motive of nomination; 2) the relationship between the name and the author-subject; 3) its pragmatic function in the text; 4) the effect it produces in the mind of the recipient.

Results and Discussion

The phenomenon of the pseudepigraph (a text written under someone else's authoritative name), long studied in Western source studies, may be regarded as a historical form of the scriptonym. As F. Jacquesson notes, in periods when copyright did not exist, the most common practice was to publish a text under the name of a famous author; this was done both to evade censorship and because the reputation of a sage attracted readers [Jacquesson 2016: 1–2]. The researcher cites two major examples. The first is the second-century "Gospel of Peter", found in 1886 in a cemetery at Akhmim in Upper Egypt: its last surviving line ends with the words "and I, Simon Peter", thereby linking the text to the name of one of Jesus' closest disciples [Jacquesson 2016: 3–4]. The second is a set of four theological treatises signed with the name of "Dionysius the Areopagite": their author presented himself as a contemporary of the Apostle Paul, although this attribution has been proven false [Jacquesson 2016: 5–6].

In both cases the name ceases to denote the biological person of an individual author. The name "Peter" or "Dionysius" was chosen to inspire trust in the reader and to elevate the spiritual and authoritative function of the text. It is precisely this feature that distinguishes the scriptonym from the pseudonym: in pseudonymy the author remains as a subject and only the name changes, whereas in the scriptonym the subject conceals their individuality for the sake of the text and puts on the mask of a "great symbolic name" formed in public consciousness.

A pseudonym (from Greek pseudēs 'false' and onyma 'name') is a fictitious name used by a person in public activity instead of their real name. As S. Ibragimova emphasizes, any signature that does not correspond to the author's real surname is a pseudonym [Ibragimova 2023: 39]. The reasons for choosing a pseudonym are diverse: modesty, the desire to shine under a brilliant name, the wish to remain unrecognized, or the separation of private and public life [Jacquesson 2016: 1]. In Uzbek literature, pseudonyms were often derived from astronyms and cosmonyms: Cho'lpon (Abdulhamid Sulaymon o'g'li), Yulduz, Mushtariy, Surayyo (A. Avloniy) [Ibragimova 2023: 122]. Some writers used dozens of pen names: according to the researcher, Abdulla Qodiriy used 14 pseudonyms [Ibragimova 2023: 47].

What the pseudonym and the scriptonym have in common is that both are nominal units replacing a real name. The difference lies in the direction of nomination. A pseudonym is the author's own second name, which over time "sticks" to the person: when readers hear "Cho'lpon", they picture one specific historical figure. A scriptonym, by contrast, appeals to a pre-existing name that already enjoys authority in society, and brings into the symbolic sphere of that name not the author but the text. In other words, a pseudonym creates a new name, whereas a scriptonym activates the cultural "scenario" of a ready-made name.

A cryptonym (from Greek kryptos 'hidden') is a sign used in order to keep a person's real name completely secret. In a cryptonym the author does not introduce themselves by any name at all: they are represented by initials, numbers or conventional signs. In an example cited by S. Ibragimova, the author of a book printed in the eighteenth century signed it "Gospodin F.S.P.V.D.B.", and this cryptonym has never been deciphered [Ibragimova 2023: 16]. Whereas in a pseudonym the author appears under an alternative name, in a cryptonym identification itself is suspended.

The scriptonym differs fundamentally from the cryptonym: it is not the absence of a name, but an alternative name with positive, complementary content. While a cryptonym leaves the reader in a state of knowledge that "the author is unknown", a scriptonym brings the reader to a definite, albeit false, conviction that "the author is an authoritative person". In this sense, the cryptonym may be regarded as the zero degree of nomination, and the scriptonym as nomination with the maximum symbolic load. The ancient roots of name concealment are linked to beliefs about a magical bond between a name and its bearer: it was believed that whoever knew a person's true name gained power over them. Thus, in a cryptonym the name is hidden as a source of danger, whereas in a scriptonym it is deliberately displayed as a source of authority.

A euphemism is the replacement of a tabooed name or notion with a softened, indirect expression. As K. Allan and K. Burridge point out, taboo and euphemism are interrelated phenomena, euphemism being a natural linguistic means of "censoring" names regarded as socially awkward or dangerous [Allan, Burridge 2006]. A. Omonturdiev identifies several layers of name taboo in Uzbek speech. In the family layer, a husband traditionally addressed his wife not by her own name but by the name of their daughter or son [Omonturdiev 2006: 37]; after marriage, the bride avoids pronouncing the names of the groom's family members, who are referred to by euphemistic kinship terms such as qaynota (father-in-law), qaynona (mother-in-law) and qayn'og'a (elder brother-in-law) [Omonturdiev 2006: 175]. In the religious-spiritual layer, the disciples of Bahouddin Naqshband and the people at large considered it disrespectful to pronounce the true name of their spiritual master and exalted him as "Hazrati Xoja" or "Hazrat xojamiz" ("His Holiness the Khoja", "our Holy Khoja") [Omonturdiev 2006: 36]. In the political layer, titles and epithets were used instead of the names of great rulers: the ruler of Rum was called Qaysar (Caesar), the ruler of China Fag'fur, and the ruler of Turkestan Xoqon (Khagan) [Omonturdiev 2006: 37].

These examples reveal the boundary between the euphemism, the periphrasis and the scriptonym. The principal motive of the euphemism is protection and propriety: a tabooed name is replaced because it is considered "dangerous" or "inappropriate". The periphrasis (descriptive expression), in turn, names an object through its salient feature: "Sohibqiron" ('Lord of the Auspicious Conjunction', Amir Temur), "the sultan of poets" (Alisher Navoi). The periphrasis often performs an aesthetic and stylistic function and creates imagery in the text. The scriptonym differs from both the euphemism and the periphrasis in its purpose. It is used not to conceal or to embellish, but to transfer to a text or speech a ready-made meaning-scenario associated with an authoritative person, event or ritual. The phrase "Hazrati Xoja", which originates in euphemistic reverence, approaches the scriptonym when over time it becomes a sign evoking the scenario of an entire spiritual tradition (the Sufi path, the master–disciple relationship). This demonstrates the mobility of the boundaries between these units.

The category of the proper name is itself not rigid. M. Rangel Vicente interprets the proper name as a bipolar, gradually structured category in which there are intermediate cases ranging from prototypical proper names to units close to common nouns [Rangel Vicente 2019: 39–41].

The scriptonym is located precisely in this intermediate zone: in form it resembles a proper name, but in function it becomes a sign that generalizes a certain meaning (authority, sanctity, prestige).

The results of the analysis are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Criteria for distinguishing the scriptonym from adjacent onomastic units

Unit	Motive of nomination	Relationship to the author-subject	Pragmatic function	Effect on the recipient
Pseudonym	Personal: avoiding recognition, creating an image.	The subject remains; only the name changes.	Presenting the author under an alternative name.	"This is the author's second name."
Cryptonym	Protection: complete concealment of identity.	Identification is suspended.	Concealing information.	"The author is unknown."
Euphemism	Taboo, propriety, reverence.	The bearer remains; the name is not pronounced.	Softening and protecting communication.	Reverence or caution in the face of danger.
Periphrasis	Stylistic-aesthetic.	The object is named through its feature.	Imagery, evaluation.	Figurative image.
Scriptonym	Authority, legitimacy, cultural meaning.	The subject wears the mask of a symbolic name.	Enhancing discursive authority; activating a ready-made scenario.	"This text/speech belongs to the sphere of an authoritative name."

Conclusion

The analysis shows that although the pseudonym, the cryptonym, the euphemism, the periphrasis and the scriptonym share a common basis as mechanisms for replacing a real name, their internal motivation and discursive function differ. The cryptonym represents the zero degree of nomination and performs a protective function; the pseudonym is a second name belonging to the author and preserves his or her individuality; the euphemism replaces a name in compliance with taboo and the requirements of propriety; the periphrasis describes an object through its feature. The scriptonym, in turn, is a conceptual sign consciously chosen to endow a nominal unit with an additional socio-spiritual, religious or symbolic load and to enhance the discursive authority of the text. The proposed four-criteria model makes it possible to substantiate the terminological independence of the scriptonym and to position it precisely within the system of

Uzbek onomastics. In further research, it would be expedient to test these criteria on material from contemporary Uzbek journalism and political discourse.

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