

MYTHOLOGICAL ELEMENTS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK EPICS AND THEIR FUNCTIONS

<https://doi.org/10.70728/phil.v05.i04.067>

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Abstract: This article examines the role and function of mythological elements in English and Uzbek epics from a comparative literary perspective. Mythological motifs, characters, and symbolic structures are analyzed as integral components that reflect the worldview, cultural memory, and spiritual values of a nation. The study explores how mythological elements in English epics such as *Beowulf* and Uzbek epics like *Alpomish* serve narrative, ideological, and aesthetic purposes. Drawing on the theoretical insights of both Uzbek and international scholars, the research highlights similarities and differences in the use of mythological imagery, archetypes, and narrative patterns. The findings demonstrate that mythological elements function not only as narrative devices but also as carriers of ethical norms, collective identity, and historical consciousness.

Keywords: mythology, epic literature, archetype, cultural symbolism, Uzbek epics, English epics, narrative function, folklore

INGLIZ VA O'ZBEK EPOSLARIDA MIFOLOGIK UNSURLAR VA ULARNING VAZIFASI

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Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqolada ingliz va o'zbek eposlarida mifologik unsurlar va ularning vazifalari qiyosiy adabiyotshunoslik nuqtai nazaridan tahlil qilinadi. Mifologik motivlar, obrazlar va ramziy tuzilmalar xalqning dunyoqarashi, madaniy xotirasi hamda ma'naviy qadriyatlarini aks ettiruvchi muhim komponentlar sifatida o'rganiladi. Tadqiqotda ingliz eposi *Beowulf* va o'zbek eposi *Alpomish* misolida mifologik unsurlarning badiiy, g'oyaviy va narrativ funksiyalari yoritiladi. O'zbek va xorijiy olimlarning nazariy qarashlariga tayanilgan holda, mifologik obrazlar,

arxetiplar va syujet modellari o'rtasidagi o'xshashlik va farqlar aniqlanadi. Natijalar shuni ko'rsatadiki, mifologik unsurlar nafaqat syujetni rivojlantiruvchi vosita, balki axloqiy me'yorlar, milliy o'zlik va tarixiy ongni ifodalovchi muhim omildir.

Kalit so'zlar: mifologiya, epos, arxetip, madaniy ramzlar, o'zbek eposlari, ingliz eposlari, narrativ funksiya, folklor

Introduction

Epic literature has long been recognized as a reflection of a society's cultural and historical consciousness. Scholars such as M. H. Abrams emphasize that mythological elements in epics are not merely decorative but serve as structural foundations of narrative meaning. Similarly, Uzbek scholars like N. Mallaev argue that epic traditions preserve ancient mythological layers that shape national identity and moral values [1].

In English epic tradition, particularly in *Beowulf*, mythological creatures such as Grendel and the dragon embody chaos and existential threats, reflecting early medieval cosmology. In contrast, Uzbek epics like *Alpomish* incorporate mythological motifs that emphasize heroism, divine protection, and communal values. According to E. Musurmonov, Uzbek epic narratives are deeply rooted in mythopoetic thinking, where supernatural elements function as expressions of collective belief systems [6].

This study builds on these perspectives by examining how mythological elements operate within the narrative structure of English and Uzbek epics. It aims to demonstrate that despite cultural differences, both traditions utilize mythology as a means of conveying universal human concerns such as good versus evil, destiny, and moral order.

Literature review

The study of mythological elements in epic literature has been widely addressed in both Western and Uzbek scholarship. Joseph Campbell's theory of the "monomyth" suggests that mythological narratives across cultures share a universal structure centered on the hero's journey. This concept is particularly relevant in analyzing both English and Uzbek epics, where protagonists undergo trials that symbolize spiritual and social transformation [3].

Northrop Frye highlights that myth forms the basis of all literary structures, arguing that epic narratives rely heavily on archetypal patterns. In Uzbek literary studies, B. Sarimsakov and N. Mallaev have explored the mythological roots of folk epics, emphasizing their connection to ancient beliefs and oral traditions [4]. Z. Narimonova also notes that linguistic and cultural expressions in folklore often preserve mythological meanings, even in transformed forms [5].

Furthermore, comparative studies indicate that while English epics tend to portray mythological elements in a more symbolic and allegorical manner, Uzbek epics

integrate them into everyday narrative reality. This difference reflects broader distinctions in cultural worldview and narrative style.

Methodology

This research applies a comparative-analytical approach to examine mythological elements in selected English and Uzbek epics. Textual analysis was used to identify mythological motifs, such as supernatural beings, heroic archetypes, and symbolic objects, within *Beowulf* and *Alpomish*. These elements were then compared to determine their narrative roles and cultural significance.

Additionally, a contextual analysis was conducted to interpret how mythological elements reflect the historical and cultural environment in which each epic was created. For instance, mythological creatures in *Beowulf* were analyzed in relation to Anglo-Saxon beliefs, while divine and supernatural motifs in *Alpomish* were examined within the framework of Turkic mythology [7].

The study also employed an interpretative method to assess how these elements contribute to the overall meaning of the texts. Rather than defining the methods theoretically, the research demonstrates their application through direct analysis of epic narratives and scholarly interpretations.

Results And Discussion

The analysis reveals that mythological elements in both English and Uzbek epics serve multiple functions. First, they act as narrative drivers, creating conflict and shaping the hero's journey. In *Beowulf*, monsters symbolize external and internal struggles, while in *Alpomish*, supernatural assistance reinforces the hero's moral and social legitimacy [8].

Second, mythological elements function as carriers of cultural values. English epics emphasize individual heroism and existential struggle, whereas Uzbek epics highlight communal harmony, loyalty, and spiritual resilience.

Third, these elements contribute to the aesthetic structure of the epics by enhancing imagery, symbolism, and emotional impact. Mythological motifs create a sense of grandeur and timelessness, elevating the narrative beyond ordinary reality.

Discussion

The findings suggest that mythological elements are essential to understanding the deeper meaning of epic literature. While both English and Uzbek epics share common archetypal patterns, their functions differ according to cultural context. This supports Campbell's theory of universal myth structures while also confirming Frye's argument about the adaptability of myth in literature.

Uzbek epics demonstrate a closer integration of myth and daily life, reflecting a worldview where the supernatural is part of reality. In contrast, English epics often present mythological elements as symbolic representations of abstract concepts such as evil, fate, and mortality.

These differences highlight the importance of cultural perspective in literary analysis. At the same time, the similarities indicate a shared human tendency to use mythology as a means of explaining the world and expressing fundamental values.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the comparative analysis of mythological elements in English and Uzbek epics demonstrates their fundamental role in shaping the narrative structure, cultural meaning, and aesthetic depth of epic literature. Mythological motifs, including supernatural beings, heroic archetypes, and symbolic events, function not merely as decorative elements but as essential components that guide the development of the сюжет and convey deeper philosophical and ethical ideas.

The study confirms that both English and Uzbek epic traditions share universal mythological patterns, particularly in their representation of the hero's journey, the struggle between good and evil, and the concept of destiny. However, significant differences emerge in their interpretation and integration of myth. English epics tend to present mythological elements in a more symbolic and allegorical manner, often reflecting existential concerns and individual heroism. In contrast, Uzbek epics incorporate mythology as a natural and inseparable part of reality, emphasizing collective values such as loyalty, bravery, social harmony, and spiritual continuity.

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