



## CULTURAL SPECIFICITY AND REPRESENTATION OF MYTHOLOGICAL IMAGES IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK LITERATURE

*Usmanova Feruza Rahmatjonovna*

*O‘zbekiston Davlat Jahon tillari*

*universiteti katta o‘qituvchisi*

*E-mail: [feruzausmanova2020@gmail.com](mailto:feruzausmanova2020@gmail.com)*

**Abstract:** *This article explores the use of mythological images in English and Uzbek literature, analyzing how these representations reflect cultural specificity and shared human experiences. By examining notable literary works from both traditions, we aim to uncover the ways in which mythology serves as a lens through which authors express cultural values, beliefs, and social norms. The discussion highlights the importance of understanding these mythological references, which enrich the narrative and deepen the reader's engagement with the text.*

**Keywords:** *Mythology, English literature, Uzbek literature, cultural specificity.*

Mythology (from the [Greek](#) mythos for story-of-the-people, and logos for word or speech, so the spoken story of a people) is the study and interpretation of often sacred tales or fables of a culture known as myths or the collection of such stories which deal with various aspects of the human condition: good and evil; the meaning of suffering; human origins; the origin of place-names, animals, cultural values, and traditions. Mythology serves as a significant foundation in literature, providing rich narratives that reflect the values, beliefs, and identities of cultures. In both English and Uzbek literature, mythological images play a crucial role in shaping stories and characterizations. This article delves into the cultural specificities of mythological representations in these two literary traditions, showcasing how they inform the narratives and resonate with readers. By understanding these mythological elements, one can gain a deeper appreciation of the cultural contexts that influence literary creation.

### **Discussion**

The interaction between myth and literature plays a significant role in enriching narrative depth and serving as a platform for cultural expression. In this context, mythological figures and stories not only provide insight into human experiences but also reflect the values and worldviews of the societies that produce them. A prime example of this is the character of Puck in William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1600). Puck, also known as Robin Goodfellow, is a mischievous fairy who functions as a bridge between the human and supernatural realms. His role in the play highlights the chaos and complexities of love, as well as the fluid boundaries between reality and fantasy. Through Puck, Shakespeare explores the transformative and unpredictable nature of human relationships, drawing on traditional folklore while simultaneously offering a commentary on human behavior and societal norms (Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*).

Similarly, in Uzbek literature, the hero Alpomish serves as a cultural touchstone that embodies the ideals of resilience, valor, and honor. Alpomish is the protagonist



of one of the most important epic poems in Uzbek literature, a narrative that has been passed down through generations. His journey, which involves overcoming various trials, fighting for justice, and securing his place as a national hero, reflects the virtues highly esteemed in Uzbek culture. The story of Alpomish is not only a tale of personal strength but also an expression of national pride and identity, resonating deeply within the context of the region's historical struggles and aspirations (Dudash, 1993).

Moreover, the adaptation of mythological images in literature across different cultures demonstrates the dynamic and evolving nature of storytelling. As societies change, so too do their interpretations of myth. In contemporary English literature, classical myths continue to be reimagined and infused with modern themes. For instance, in works such as Margaret Atwood's *The Penelopiad* (2005), the ancient myth of Penelope from Homer's *Odyssey* is revisited, with a feminist lens that reinterprets Penelope's role and voice within the myth, offering a critique of traditional narratives and gender roles. This reimagining illustrates how modern authors engage with myth to reflect contemporary issues, such as gender inequality and societal expectations (Atwood, 2005).

Similarly, in Uzbek literature, the process of adapting and integrating traditional mythological themes has taken on new dimensions as the country has become increasingly globalized. The blend of traditional stories with contemporary issues has led to a transformation in how myths are told and understood. In modern Uzbek narratives, the fusion of folklore with global influences allows for a richer, more nuanced exploration of national identity and the challenges posed by globalization. Writers are now able to merge the ancient with the contemporary, incorporating new perspectives while preserving the cultural significance of traditional myth (Azimov, 2018).

Literature	Author	Mythological Reference	Cultural Significance
English	William Shakespeare	Puck ( <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> )	Represents mischief and the supernatural
English	John Milton	Satan ( <i>Paradise Lost</i> )	Embodies rebellion and free will
Uzbek	Anonymous	Alpomish	Symbolizes bravery and national identity
Uzbek	Hamza Hakimzade Niyazi	Layli and Majnun	Reflects themes of love and spiritual longing

Examining mythological imagery in English and Uzbek literature highlights the unique cultural influences that shape narrative traditions in each. Both literatures use myth to convey values, identities, and beliefs, yet they do so through culturally distinct perspectives. Exploring these mythological elements deepens our



understanding of each literary tradition and enhances our appreciation of humanity’s diverse experiences. As literature evolves, the relationship between mythology and cultural identity will continue to be a rich subject for study and discussion.

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