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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF BRAVERY IN BEOWULF AND ALPOMISH

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Abstract: *This article presents a comparative analysis of Beowulf, the central hero of the Old English epic Beowulf and Alpomish, the main hero of the Uzbek heroic epic Alpomish, with particular attention to the concept of bravery. Both heroes represent important ideals of courage, strength, loyalty, perseverance, and self-sacrifice. Beowulf demonstrates bravery by confronting supernatural enemies, including Grendel, Grendel's mother and the dragon. His courage is closely connected with warrior honor, personal reputation, responsibility, and the protection of his people. Alpomish demonstrates bravery through battles, difficult trials, captivity, and his struggle to protect his family, beloved Barchin, homeland, and social community.*

Keywords: *Beowulf, Alpomish, bravery, heroism, courage, epic literature, Uzbek folklore, Anglo-Saxon literature, comparative literature, warrior, loyalty, self-sacrifice.*

"BEOVULF" VA "ALPOMISH" DOSTONLARIDA JASORATNING QIYOSIY TAHLILI

Annotatsiya: *Ushbu maqolada qadimgi ingliz epik dostoni «Beowulf»ning bosh qahramoni Beovulf hamda o'zbek xalq qahramonlik dostoni «Alpomish»ning bosh qahramoni Alpomish jasorat tushunchasi nuqtayi nazaridan qiyosiy tahlil qilinadi. Har ikkala qahramon ham mardlik, kuch, sadoqat, matonat va fidoyilik kabi muhim fazilatlarni namoyon etadi. Beovulf Grendel, Grendelning onasi va ajdar kabi g'ayritabiiy kuchlarga qarshi kurashib, o'z jasoratini namoyish etadi. Uning jasorati jangovar sharaf, shaxsiy obro', burch va xalqini himoya qilish bilan bog'liq. Alpomish esa janglar, og'ir sinovlar va uzoq muddatli asirlik jarayonida o'z jasoratini namoyon qiladi. U oilasi, Barchin, vatani va xalqining manfaatlarini himoya qilishga intiladi.*

Kalit so'zlar: *Beovulf, Alpomish, jasorat, qahramonlik, mardlik, epik adabiyot, o'zbek folklori, qadimgi ingliz adabiyoti, qiyosiy adabiyotshunoslik, jangchi, sadoqat, fidoyilik.*

СРАВНИТЕЛЬНОЕ ИССЛЕДОВАНИЕ КОНЦЕПТА ХРАБРОСТИ В ЭПОСАХ «БЕОВУЛЬФ» И «АЛПОМИШ»

Аннотация: *В статье проводится сравнительный анализ Беовульфа, главного героя древнеанглийского эпоса «Беовульф», и Алпомиша, центрального героя узбекского героического эпоса «Алпомиш», с особым вниманием к понятию храбрости. Оба героя воплощают такие важные качества, как мужество, сила, верность, стойкость и самопожертвование. Беовульф проявляет храбрость в борьбе с такими сверхъестественными противниками, как Грендель, мать Гренделя и дракон. Его мужество связано с воинской честью, личной славой, чувством долга и защитой своего народа. Алпомиш проявляет храбрость в сражениях, испытаниях и длительном плену, стремясь защитить свою семью, возлюбленную Барчин, родную землю и общество*

Ключевые слова: *Беовульф, Алпомиш, храбрость, героизм, мужество, эпическая литература, узбекский фольклор, древнеанглийская литература, сравнительное литературоведение, воин, верность, самопожертвование.*

Introduction

Heroic epics occupy an important place in the literary and cultural heritage of different nations, reflecting their historical experience, moral values, social ideals, and concepts of heroism. Among the most significant examples of epic literature are *Beowulf*, one of the earliest and most influential works of Old English literature, and *Alpomish*, a major heroic epic of the Uzbek and broader Turkic oral tradition. Although these epics emerged in different geographical, historical, and cultural environments, both place bravery at the center of the heroic ideal. The protagonists, Beowulf and Alpomish, demonstrate courage not only through physical strength and military ability but also through loyalty, responsibility, perseverance, and readiness to protect their communities.

In *Beowulf*, bravery is closely connected with the Anglo-Saxon heroic code, which emphasizes loyalty to one's lord and people, personal honor, reputation, physical courage, and willingness to confront danger. Beowulf's battles against

Grendel, Grendel's mother, and the dragon demonstrate different dimensions of heroic courage. His bravery gradually develops from the youthful desire to prove his strength and gain fame into the mature responsibility of a ruler who is prepared to sacrifice his life for the safety of his people. Thus, bravery in the epic functions both as an individual virtue and as a social obligation.

In *Alpomish*, courage is similarly represented as a fundamental characteristic of the ideal hero. However, it is strongly associated with loyalty to family, love, homeland, community, and traditional values. Alpomish faces physical challenges, rivalry, separation, captivity, and various social obstacles. His heroic identity is revealed not merely through victory over opponents but also through his endurance, faithfulness to Barchin, devotion to his relatives, and determination to restore justice and social order. Therefore, the concept of bravery in *Alpomish* combines physical heroism with moral strength and social responsibility.

A comparative examination of these two epics provides an opportunity to identify both universal and culturally specific representations of bravery. In both works, the hero is expected to overcome fear, protect others, remain loyal to important moral principles, and prove himself through difficult trials. At the same time, the cultural meanings attached to these actions differ according to the social structures, traditions, and ethical systems represented in each epic.

Literature review and Methodology

Heroism is one of the most important concepts in world epic literature. Different peoples have created heroic characters who embody the moral and social ideals of their communities. Beowulf and Alpomish are particularly significant examples because they belong to different literary and cultural traditions but demonstrate several universal qualities of the epic hero. *Beowulf* is an Old English heroic poem centered on a warrior who confronts supernatural and mortal dangers. Alpomish is a major Uzbek heroic epic that celebrates manliness, unity, love, faithfulness, and the strength of family. The Uzbek version associated with Fozil Yo'ldosh o'g'li includes Alpomish's contests with Kalmak warriors, his struggle to win Barchin, seven years of captivity, his return, and his victory over the usurper Ulton.

Beowulf's Bravery

Beowulf's bravery is first demonstrated through his willingness to confront Grendel. He travels to Heorot knowing that Grendel is a powerful and deadly enemy. Rather than avoiding the monster, Beowulf deliberately accepts the challenge.

His bravery becomes particularly significant because he chooses to confront Grendel without relying on weapons. This action presents courage as confidence in one's own strength and willingness to face danger directly.

Alpomish's Bravery

Alpomish's bravery is expressed through physical strength, endurance, loyalty, and determination. His heroic identity is established through contests and struggles with powerful opponents. His courage is particularly evident in the difficulties he faces while trying to protect his relationships and social community.

Comparative Analysis of Bravery

Aspect	Beowulf	Alpomish
Main form of bravery	Fighting monsters and enemies	Fighting enemies and overcoming prolonged trials
Major motivation	Protection, duty, honor and reputation	Family, love, homeland, justice and social unity
Physical courage	Very strong	Very strong
Psychological endurance	Demonstrated through dangerous battles and old age	Especially demonstrated through captivity and suffering
Self-sacrifice	Central to his final battle	Present through risks taken for family and community
Cultural ideal	Warrior and king	Warrior, family protector and social leader
Final heroic meaning	Sacrifice and heroic legacy	Restoration, justice and unity

The study uses a comparative literary method. The analysis is based on close reading and comparison of the heroic actions, conflicts, motivations, and moral values associated with Beowulf and Alpomish.

The following approaches are used:

1.Comparative analysis – similarities and differences between the two heroes are identified.

2.Character analysis – the heroes' actions and decisions are examined as expressions of bravery.

3.Cultural-historical approach – the relationship between heroism and the social values of Anglo-Saxon and Uzbek epic traditions is considered.

4.Textual analysis – important episodes involving battles, danger, sacrifice, loyalty, and endurance are analyzed.

5.Interpretive approach – bravery is considered not only as physical courage but also as moral and psychological strength.

Results and Discussion

The comparative analysis produces the following results:

1.Both Beowulf and Alpomish are fearless heroes. They willingly confront powerful enemies and dangerous situations.

2.Physical courage is fundamental to both characters. Their heroic status is demonstrated through battles and difficult challenges.

3.Beowulf's bravery is strongly associated with honor, reputation, leadership, and sacrifice.

4.Alpomish's bravery is strongly associated with family, love, loyalty, justice, and the unity of the community.

5.Both heroes demonstrate perseverance, but Alpomish's prolonged captivity particularly emphasizes endurance.

6.Their bravery reflects their cultural traditions. Comparative scholarship likewise identifies courage, loyalty, and honor as shared heroic qualities while noting differences in their social roles.

7.The two epics demonstrate that bravery is a universal heroic value, although its meaning changes according to cultural and social context.

Beowulf and Alpomish are powerful examples of heroic bravery in world literature. Both heroes demonstrate courage by confronting danger, protecting others, enduring suffering, and accepting responsibility. Their bravery, however, has different emphases. Beowulf's courage is primarily represented through heroic combat, honor, leadership, and the willingness to sacrifice his life for his people. Alpomish's bravery combines physical courage with endurance, loyalty, love, family responsibility, and the restoration of justice.

The comparative analysis of *Beowulf* and *Alpomish* demonstrates that bravery is a central element in the construction of the heroic ideal in both epics. Despite their different historical and cultural backgrounds, the two works present courage as a multidimensional quality that combines physical strength, psychological endurance, loyalty, responsibility, and moral commitment. Both Beowulf and Alpomish prove their heroic status through trials that require them to overcome danger and place collective interests above personal comfort.

Conclusion

At the same time, the representation of bravery reflects the specific cultural values of each epic tradition. In *Beowulf*, courage is closely related to the Anglo-Saxon ideals of honor, reputation, loyalty, warrior ethics, and heroic sacrifice. Beowulf's willingness to confront powerful enemies establishes his reputation as a warrior, while his final struggle with the dragon transforms personal bravery into the self-sacrificing responsibility of a king. In this sense, the epic presents courage as both a means of achieving individual glory and a duty toward society.

In *Alpomish*, bravery is more strongly integrated with devotion to family, love, homeland, community, and the restoration of justice. Alpomish's heroism is demonstrated not only through physical confrontations but also through patience, endurance, loyalty, and his ability to remain faithful to his moral commitments despite prolonged hardship. His courage therefore represents a synthesis of physical power and spiritual steadfastness.

The comparison also reveals an important universal feature of epic heroism: true bravery is not simply the absence of fear or the possession of extraordinary physical strength; it is the ability to act responsibly in the face of danger for the protection of values greater than oneself. Both epics use the figure of the hero to preserve and transmit socially significant ideals from one generation to another.

Thus, *Beowulf* and *Alpomish* demonstrate how geographically distant literary traditions can develop comparable heroic concepts while preserving their distinctive cultural characteristics. Their similarities point to universal human ideals of courage, loyalty, perseverance, and responsibility, whereas their differences reveal the particular historical and ethical values of Anglo-Saxon and Uzbek-Turkic societies. A comparative study of these epics therefore contributes not only to literary analysis but also to a broader understanding of intercultural connections and the universal foundations of heroic thought.

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