

THE COMPARATIVE LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL STUDY OF ANTHROPNOMS  
IN THE EPICS “ALPOMISH” AND “BEOWULF”

**Mustafoyeva Maksad Askarovna**

The teacher of the Department of Foreign Language and Social Science,  
Asia International University,  
Bukhara, Uzbekistan.  
mustafaevamaksad@gmail.com

**Abstract.** This article provides a comparative analysis of anthroponyms (personal names) in two major heroic epics — the Uzbek Alpomish and the Old English Beowulf. Both works serve as mirrors of their respective nations’ moral systems, social order, and linguistic creativity. While Alpomish represents the synthesis of Turkic and Islamic heritage, Beowulf reflects the transition from Germanic paganism to early Christian values. Through a linguistic and cultural approach, this paper explores how names in both epics convey heroism, loyalty, and national identity.

**Keywords:** Alpomish, Beowulf, anthroponymy, heroism, Turkic linguistics, Old English, national identity, etymology, semantics, oral tradition, cultural symbolism, onomastics, moral values.

**Introduction.** The Uzbek “Alpomish” and the Anglo-Saxon “Beowulf” are among the oldest and most important heroic narratives in world literature. Despite originating in vastly different times and regions, both epics share common heroic ideals — courage, loyalty, justice, and the protection of one’s people.

In both works, anthroponyms — personal names — are not random designations but symbolic carriers of meaning. They express social status, individual traits, moral values, and cultural identity. By analyzing these names, we can uncover how each nation viewed the ideal human being and the moral foundation of society.

**Literature Review.** The study of anthroponyms in epic literature has long been a subject of linguistic, folkloric, and cultural research. In Uzbek scholarship, the Alpomish epic has been analyzed by researchers such as Hodi Zarifov, M. Afzalov, M. Saidov, and N. Mallayev, who explored its historical background, oral variants, and symbolic meanings. Their works reveal that the epic embodies the spiritual ideals and heroic ethics of the Uzbek nation. Later linguistic research by O. Jo‘rayev, R. Doniyorov, D. Yo‘ldosheva, and M. Qodirova deepened the understanding of Uzbek anthroponymy, emphasizing the connection between naming systems, cultural identity, and historical consciousness.

Internationally, anthroponymy has been studied as a bridge between language, culture, and history. Superanskaya (1973) described personal names as “cultural codes” that reflect a society’s worldview. V. Vorobyov and Yu. Prokhorov later expanded this idea through linguoculturology, showing how names function as carriers of collective moral values.

In English literature, scholars such as J. R. R. Tolkien, R. D. Fulk, and A. Orchard analyzed Beowulf not only as a heroic poem but also as a linguistic monument of Old English culture. Studies by Fulk (1992) and Klaeber (2008) have shown that Beowulf’s personal names often combine symbolic and etymological meanings derived from Old English and Old Norse traditions, reflecting both pagan myth and Christian morality.

While previous research has examined Alpomish and Beowulf separately, few comparative studies have analyzed their anthroponymic systems from a linguocultural and semantic

perspective. This gap provides the basis for the current research, which seeks to uncover shared symbolic structures and national distinctions between the two naming traditions.

**Research Methodology.** This study applies a comparative linguocultural approach to analyze the anthroponyms in Alpomish and Beowulf. The research integrates descriptive, etymological, semantic, and comparative methods to uncover the linguistic and cultural layers embedded in personal names.

**Descriptive Analysis** – Each anthroponym in both epics was identified and analyzed in terms of linguistic form, lexical meaning, and symbolic function within the narrative.

**Etymological Method** – The historical roots and morphological components of names were examined, with particular attention to Turkic, Persian, and Arabic elements in Alpomish and Germanic, Old Norse, and Christian influences in Beowulf.

**Semantic and Functional Analysis** – The study explored how each name contributes to character development, moral symbolism, and thematic structure in the epics.

**Linguocultural Approach** – Anthroponyms were interpreted as cultural signs expressing the worldview, ethics, and social ideals of each nation.

**Comparative Method** – By comparing the structural and semantic patterns of names across the two epics, the study identified universal heroic motifs (e.g., “wolf,” “bravery,” “wisdom”) as well as culturally specific ones reflecting religious and social contexts. Through the integration of these methods, the research seeks to provide a holistic understanding of how anthroponyms in Alpomish and Beowulf encode the spiritual heritage, moral values, and national identities of their peoples

**Results and discussions.** In Alpomish, names are deeply connected to the Turkic worldview and ancient nomadic traditions. The hero’s name itself, Alpomish, comes from “Alp” meaning “hero, brave man,” and “Omish”, a form indicating strength or stability. Thus, Alpomish literally means “the brave and steadfast one,” embodying the highest ideal of heroism among the Turkic peoples.

Other characters’ names also have symbolic meanings. Barchinoy combines barchin (“silk thread”) and oy (“moon”), symbolizing beauty, purity, and femininity. Boybo‘ri (“rich wolf”) connects wealth and strength with the wolf totem — an ancient Turkic symbol of power and leadership. Hakimbek unites the Arabic word Hakim (“wise”) and Turkic bek (“lord”), emphasizing justice and wisdom in leadership. Even secondary names such as Qaldirg‘och (“swallow”) express agility, loyalty, and happiness.

Overall, anthroponyms in Alpomish express collective ideals rather than individual ambition. They promote values such as loyalty to one’s people, protection of family honor, and divine justice. These names function as linguistic monuments to the moral and social identity of the Uzbek nation.

In Beowulf, anthroponyms derive primarily from Old English and Old Norse linguistic roots. They are compound words that often combine elements referring to strength, fame, or moral quality. The name Beowulf itself joins “Beo” (bee) and “wulf” (wolf), forming the kenning “bee-wolf,” a poetic metaphor for “bear,” which symbolizes great power and courage.

The king Hrothgar’s name comes from “hrod” (fame) and “gar” (spear), meaning “famous spear,” emphasizing martial honor and noble lineage. Hygelac means “thoughtful” or “generous,” reflecting the mental and moral qualities expected of a leader. Unferth, meaning “un-peace” or “troubled mind,” symbolizes moral weakness and jealousy, while Wealhtheow, the queen, means “foreign servant,” referring to her diplomatic and hospitable role in uniting clans.

In Beowulf, personal names encapsulate the Germanic warrior code, where reputation (lof), bravery, and loyalty to one's lord define moral worth. The names carry both literal and symbolic significance, binding individuals to the fate (wyrd) that governs life in the epic's world.

The naming systems in Alpomish and Beowulf share several striking similarities, yet they reveal distinct cultural layers. Both employ compound structures — combining two meaningful elements to form a name that embodies moral and physical qualities. In Alpomish, these elements are Turkic (Alp, Bo'ri, Bek, Oy), while in Beowulf they are Old English or Norse (wulf, gar, ferth).

In both epics, animal imagery plays a significant role. The wolf appears in Boybo'ri and in Beowulf's own name, symbolizing bravery, aggression, and leadership. However, while the wolf in Turkic tradition is a sacred totem — a divine ancestor of the people — in Anglo-Saxon culture it represents power and danger. Thus, the same animal image carries different cultural meanings.

Female names in Alpomish such as Barchinoy express beauty, loyalty, and domestic virtue, whereas in Beowulf, female figures like Wealhtheow are fewer and function mainly as peace-weavers or mediators between men. This contrast shows that in Turkic oral tradition, women's moral strength is central to the epic world, while in the Anglo-Saxon heroic code, it is secondary to male heroism.

Religious influence also distinguishes the two epics. Alpomish reflects an Islamic and pre-Islamic Turkic worldview, in which destiny is connected with divine justice. Beowulf, though rooted in pagan myth, is infused with Christian interpretation — the hero's battle against monsters becomes a symbol of spiritual struggle between good and evil. Thus, while Alpomish centers on family honor, community, and divine order, Beowulf focuses on individual heroism, fate, and moral endurance. Both, however, use names as condensed expressions of ethical and national ideals.

The Turkic concept of "Alp" parallels the Germanic idea of a "thane" — both representing the warrior ideal who serves his lord and defends his people.

The motif of the wolf connects the two traditions, though with nuanced meanings: in Alpomish it is a guardian and ancestral spirit; in Beowulf, it symbolizes ferocity and struggle. Female figures like Barchinoy and Wealhtheow share symbolic functions as embodiments of peace and moral virtue, anchoring the heroic world within human empathy. In both epics, anthroponyms are more than mere identifiers — they are linguistic tools for moral education. Listeners of these oral traditions were expected to learn virtue, courage, and faith through the examples encoded in the heroes' names.

**Conclusion.** The comparative study of anthroponyms in Alpomish and Beowulf demonstrates that both epics use personal names as reflections of national spirit and moral philosophy. In Alpomish, names express the unity of Turkic linguistic creativity and Islamic ethical thought, celebrating courage, loyalty, and kinship. In Beowulf, anthroponyms embody the Germanic sense of fate, heroism, and Christian moral struggle. Although differing in religion and worldview, both traditions use names to transmit their deepest cultural values. The linguistic structure — compounding meaningful morphemes — serves as a universal poetic device, while the semantic content reflects each nation's ethical ideals.

Ultimately, the anthroponyms in Alpomish and Beowulf stand as linguocultural symbols of human virtue, showing how language and storytelling preserve the spiritual identity of nations across centuries.

#### References:

1. Zarifov, H. (1975). Alpomish. Toshkent: Fan. – 368 b.

2. Суперанская, А. В.(2007). Общая теория имени собственного. Изд. 2-е, испр. Москва:URSS. – 365 с.
3. Никонов, В. А. (1992). Имя и общество: История и теория имён собственных в России. Москва: Наука. – 278 с.
4. Баскаков, Н. А. (1970). Тюркские языки: Вопросы ономастики. Москва: Наука. –242 с.
5. Mustafojeva, M. A. (2024). THE STUDY AND IMPORTANCE OF ANTHROPONYMS IN LINGUISTICS. Bulletin news in New Science Society International Scientific Journal, 1(5), 20-23.
6. Mustafojeva, M. A. (2024). ANTHROPONYMS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK LANGUAGES AND THEIR LINGUOCULTURAL CLASSIFICATION. Bulletin news in New Science Society International Scientific Journal, 1(6), 146-150.
7. Mustafoeva, M. A. (2024). The Significance of Proper and Common Nouns in Linguistics. European journal of innovation in nonformal education (EJINE), 4(10).
8. Mustafoeva, M. A. (2022). The lexical layers of Uzbek anthroponyms. Fars international journal of education, social sciences and humanities, 10(12), 2022-6.
9. Mustafoeva, M. A. (2024). The importance of nouns in linguistics for learning language. European journal of innovation in nonformal education (EJINE), 4(9).
10. Mustafoeva, M. A. (2022). Ingliz tilidagi antroponimlarning rivojlanishining tarixiy taraqqiyot davri va leksik qatlami. Namangan Davlat Universiteti Ilmiy Axborotnomasi, 12, 2181-0427.
11. Askarovna, M. M. (2025). Modern Methods of Studying Anthroponyms in Linguistics and Their Significance. Spanish Journal of Innovation and Integrity, 38, 83-87.
12. Askarovna, M. M. (2025). ANTHROPONYMS IN LINGUISTICS: THEIR ROLE AND LINGUISTIC FEATURES. JOURNAL OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH, MODERN VIEWS AND INNOVATIONS, 1(4), 94-99.
13. Мустафаева, М. (2025). Антропонимларнинг tilshunoslikda tutgan oʻrni va lingvistik xususiyatlari. Лингвоспектр, 2(1), 162-167.
14. Mustafoeva, M. (2025). THE INNOVATIVE WAYS OF TEACHING ANTHROPONYMS THROUGH GAME-BASED LEARNING IN ENGLISH LITERATURE LESSONS. Modern Science and Research, 4(4), 608-615.