

**COMPARATIVE TYPOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF MYTHOLOGICAL NOVELS IN
20TH-CENTURY ENGLISH AND UZBEK CHILDREN'S LITERATURE**

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Annotation. Mythological elements were widely used as the main ideological and aesthetic tool in 20th-century children's literature. Especially in English and Uzbek literature, mythological images are used to instill in children values such as kindness, courage, friendship, and justice. This article presents a comparative typological analysis of mythological novels for children in 20th-century English and Uzbek literary traditions. It explores common narrative typologies, functions of mythic elements, and cultural strategies of adaptation. Drawing on genre theory and comparative literary methodology, the study delineates how mythic narratives in both traditions shape children's cognitive and moral development. The analysis highlights patterns of appropriation, moral didacticism, and national identity, revealing both convergences and divergences in mythological representation.

Keywords: Comparative literature, mythological novels, children's literature, typology, myth, English literature, Uzbek literature, narrative functions, cultural adaptation, Explanatory function, Moral-didactic function, Identity construction, folklore.

Introduction

Myth (Greek. mythos - legend) is a set of primitive ideas of ancient man about the world, including beliefs about the creation of the universe, the emergence of man, the plant and animal world, the appearance of celestial bodies, the causes and essence of natural phenomena, mythical heroes, gods and goddesses. Myth is an expression of the unconscious emotional attitude of ancient man to reality, and is a set of the oldest ideas explaining the essence of various aspects of nature and social life. While mythological ideas explain the essence of a certain reality through imaginary fiction, myths are perceived by their creators and performers as statements of events that actually happened in the place where they were created and popularized. The methods of popularization of myths, which expressed the ancient man's ideas about the world and were intended to be passed down from generation to generation, also varied, and were mainly told through live oral performance, that is, through words. The system of mythological ideas was also presented as ritual games consisting of symbolic actions that formed the essence of primitive customs and ceremonies [1]. Myth, as a narrative form, serves foundational roles in human cultures: explaining origins, modeling moral behavior, and shaping collective identities. In children's literature, mythological components are adapted to pedagogical ends: to entertain, to instruct, and to inculcate values. The 20th century witnessed the flourishing of mythological novels in English literature, driven by authors such as C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien, whose works transformed classical and medieval mythic motifs for young audiences. Parallel to this, Uzbek children's literature developed its own mythological narratives rooted in Central Asian folklore, Islamic epic traditions, and narratives of national heritage [2].

Despite their different cultural matrices, English and Uzbek mythological novels for children share typological similarities in narrative structure, character archetypes, and functional motifs. At the same time, they differ in cultural referents, symbol systems, and ideological inflections. A comparative typological study illuminates these dynamics and contributes to broader

understandings of how myth sustains cultural continuity and pedagogical objectives in children's literature.

The present article applies comparative literary analysis to identify typological categories of mythological novels in both traditions and examines how narrative structures and functions correspond to cultural contexts.

Theoretical Framework and Methodology

Mythological novels in English and Uzbek children's literature of the 20th century reflect the mentality, historical experience and aesthetic views of both peoples. Their typological differences are manifested in the plot structure, the system of images, the mythological basis and the aesthetic interpretation. At the same time, they perform a common task in shaping the consciousness of children, instilling moral and normative values. Novels of this type encourage the reader to respect the cultural heritage of their people and to gain a deeper understanding through comparative analysis with other cultures [3].

Myth in Children's Literature. Mythological narratives transposed into children's literature often perform three interrelated functions:

1. Explanatory Function – addressing existential questions (“Where do we come from?”) through allegory or metaphor.
2. Moral-Didactic Function – encoding cultural norms and virtues.
3. Identity Construction – fostering communal or national belonging through shared mythic symbols.

Typological Analysis

Typology refers to classificatory patterns based on recurring formal and functional features of texts. In this study, the following categories are examined:

1. Source of Myth: Ancient/classic vs. indigenous/local.
2. Structural Pattern: Hero quest, creation narrative, cosmological myth, moral allegory.
3. Character Functions: Archetypes such as the Hero, Mentor, Trickster, and Threshold Guardians.
4. Narrative Strategies: Didactic narration, allegory, intertextual reference.

Comparative Method

The study juxtaposes selected English mythological novels with Uzbek counterparts, interpreting them through shared typological lenses. Emphasis is placed on the interaction of cultural traditions and literary form rather than on exhaustive historical summation.

Literature review

The impact of English mythological stories is greatly influenced by their linguistic features. Hollander talks about how archaisms and poetic forms are used in Old English and Middle English literature to convey a feeling of grandeur and historical depth. For example, the

"Beowulf" epic's use of alliterative poetry recalls the oral tradition of storytelling and strengthens its epic nature. These stories' stylistic components aid in maintaining the historical and cultural setting in which they were produced [4]. English mythology have had a significant impact on cultural values and national identity.

Murray investigates the ways in which these stories uphold characteristics like justice, bravery, and loyalty [5]. As cultural touchstones, the tales of King Arthur and his knights exemplify idealised notions of bravery and moral rectitude. These stories, which are frequently employed as representations of British cultural heritage, have had a significant influence on English literature and national consciousness.

Folk poetry and proverbs are used to enhance the storytelling heritage in Uzbek mythical legends. Lomaia investigates the ways in which these linguistic elements communicate intricate cultural and ethical messages. Proverbs and poetic forms found in Uzbek myths are used to convey social norms and values as well as to preserve cultural legacy [6]. These linguistic components offer insight into the conventional viewpoint of the Uzbek people.

Uzbek myths are essential to preserving cultural continuity and promoting patriotism. Khurshid talks about how these stories spread historical information and traditional values [7]. The Uzbek people's stories play a crucial role in maintaining their cultural identity and strengthening ties to one another. They represent the social and historical events of the community and act as a storehouse of collective memory.

Results

Mythological Novels in 20th-Century English Children's Literature

The 20th century marked a renaissance of mythic imagination in English literature for children. Influenced by Romanticism's valorization of folk tradition and by academic interest in comparative mythology, authors reimagined mythic themes within modern narratives. Two paradigmatic figures exemplify this trend:

C.S. Lewis (The Chronicles of Narnia) – interweaves classical mythic motifs, Christian allegory, and English fairy tale tradition.

J.R.R. Tolkien (The Hobbit; The Lord of the Rings) – constructs an extensive mythopoeic world drawing on Norse, Celtic, and Anglo-Saxon mythic structures.

These works engage children through quests that articulate moral conflicts, ethical growth, and cosmological wonder. They situate myth not as static heritage but as living narrative that shapes imagination and ethical sensibility.

A typological analysis of English children's mythological novels reveals dominant structures:

- Hero's Quest: Central protagonists embark on journeys that test courage and ethical resolve (e.g., Lucy Pevensie in The Voyage of the Dawn Treader; Bilbo Baggins in The Hobbit).
- Cosmological Setting: Imagined worlds with their own cosmologies and mythic histories, such as Middle-earth and Narnia, integrate mythic genealogies and symbolic landscapes.
- Allegory and Intertextuality: Many narratives employ Christian allegory or intertextual references to classical myth (e.g., Aslan as Christ-figure; Tolkien's Valar mirroring pantheon structures).

English mythological novels for children typically combine entertainment with moral teaching. By embedding ethical dilemmas in epic quests, they align mythic structures with pedagogical goals: valor, loyalty, humility, and compassion.

Mythological Novels in 20th-Century Uzbek Children's Literature

Uzbek children's literature in the 20th century emerged under complex cultural circumstances: the legacy of Central Asian oral lore, Islamic storytelling traditions, and the politics of Soviet multicultural education. Authors engaged with indigenous mythic material—epic cycles, nature spirits, and local legends—while navigating state-sponsored frameworks for moral education.

Prominent Uzbek children's narratives incorporate mythic elements such as supernatural helpers, moral trials, and cosmological motifs informed by regional folklore (e.g., Alpomish, Gur-Ghazi epic echoes) alongside domesticated mythological figures suitable for young readers.

The core typological features of Uzbek mythological novels include:

- **Folklore-Rooted Narrative:** Stories that adapt traditional epic and folk tale structures for children, preserving cultural memory.
- **Moral Parable:** Mythic episodes are often structured as parables with clear ethical teachings resonant with Islamic moral discourse and Uzbek social norms.
- **Integration of Local Symbolism:** Natural elements (mountains, rivers, desert winds) are imbued with spiritual significance, reflecting Central Asian cosmological sensibilities.

Uzbek mythological novels for children frequently utilize archetypes such as:

- ✓ **The Folk Hero:** Courageous youth who embodies communal virtues and overcomes adversity.
- ✓ **Elder Mentor:** Wise figure who guides the protagonist and conveys traditional wisdom.
- ✓ **Mythic Beings:** Supernatural creatures that act as tests or helpers, drawing on folkloric reservoirs yet adapted to child-appropriate narratives.

These narratives function to reinforce cultural continuity, emphasize communal values, and educate children about their heritage. The mythological serves not only imaginative play but also socio-ethical instruction deeply anchored in local spiritual and moral frameworks.

Discussion

Typological Comparisons: Convergences and Divergences

Narrative Structure

Convergences:

Both traditions utilize hero-centered quest structures that guide the narrative arc.

Mythic cosmologies provide frameworks for ethical conflict and growth.

Divergences:

English mythological novels often construct entire secondary worlds with elaborate mythic histories detached from familiar geography.

Uzbek narratives frequently embed mythic elements within familiar cultural and ecological spaces, making myth accessible within the lived environment of the reader.

Character Functions

Convergences:

Hero and mentor archetypes appear across both traditions.

Mythic beings perform similar narrative functions—as helpers, antagonists, or liminal figures.

Divergences:

English works often draw on pan-European mythic archetypes (dragons, dwarves, talking beasts).

Uzbek works integrate Central Asian spirit beings and folklore figures that resonate with indigenous cosmologies and Islamic cultural context.

Didactic Strategies

Convergences:

Both traditions employ mythological narratives as vectors for moral education.

Divergences:

English authors sometimes embed universal ethical inquiries (e.g., truth, sacrifice) within mythic frameworks accessible to a broad readership.

Uzbek authors often emphasize community-specific ethics tied to cultural heritage, social harmony, and collective memory.

English mythological novels draw extensively from ancient Greek, Norse, and Anglo-Saxon mythic elements, reimagined for children's sensibilities. Uzbek narratives draw on Turkic-Persian folklore, Islamic parable traditions, and indigenous cosmologies, adapted to modern narrative forms.

The association of events with vast water, fire, flood, supernatural force, giant figure, god, and miracle of the Gods (Pirs in Uzbek) in Uzbek mythology served as an incentive to establish confidence and belief in the 12 gods. These myths, to put it briefly, explain the family, the tribe, the beliefs, and the traits of this kind of myth. Titan heroes developed as the founders of goodness, the element of water, the symbol of fire, the gods of fertility, and the worship of supernatural beings, inspiring them to regard it as sacred, bolstering their faith, and ultimately allowing each to develop into an epic tradition.

The influence of dualism—the ongoing struggle between the gods of good and evil—was the basis for the creation of this kind of narrative. Legends from mythology refer to this as the blending of the two gods. At the same time, Ahraman, the deity of evil, is the destroyer and Qayumars, the god of virtue, is the creator. Qayumars is vanquished in combat and granted abundance, serenity, and tranquility. Legends advocate worshipping the god of benevolence and believing in his blessings. On the scale of opposing tyranny, the great ideas are communicated.

Conclusion

The comparative typological analysis of 20th-century English and Uzbek mythological novels for children reveals both shared narrative logics and culturally distinctive adaptations. Both traditions employ mythic narratives to engage young readers in imaginative exploration and moral reflection. Hero quests, mentor figures, and symbolic landscapes structure stories that entertain and educate. Yet, the specific mythic materials, cultural values encoded, and narrative strategies reflect differing cultural histories.

In English literature, mythological novels often build elaborated secondary worlds with intertextual links to classical myth, universalizing ethical themes within cosmopolitan imaginative universes. In contrast, Uzbek mythological narratives remain closely tethered to indigenous folklore and cultural symbols, foregrounding community identity and transmitting localized ethical frameworks.

This study underscores the importance of typological analysis for understanding how myth functions in children's literature across cultures. By comparing structural and functional patterns, scholars can discern how universal narrative drives intersect with culturally specific concerns, shaping children's mythological imagination in distinct but comparable ways.

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