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REFLECTION OF HISTORICAL-CULTURAL, ETHNOCULTURAL AND MYTHOLOGICAL FEATURES IN COSMONYMS

Berdimuratova Ro'za Rakhmanovna
Doctoral Student at Urgench State University

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the historical-cultural, ethnocultural, and mythological characteristics reflected in Uzbek language cosmonyms—names of celestial bodies, planets, and constellations. These linguistic units serve not only as markers of astronomical objects but also as indicators of the worldview, religious beliefs, and cultural heritage of Turkic peoples. Terms such as Temir qoziq *(North Star),* Cho'lpon *(Venus),* Yetti qaroqchi *(Big Dipper),* Tishtrya *(Sirius),* Quyosh *(Sun), and* Oy *(Moon) are analyzed in the context of ancient astronomical knowledge and mythological texts, including the* Avesta. *The article compares cosmonyms across Uzbek, Tajik, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Uyghur, and other regional languages, revealing their shared roots and cultural significance. The analysis also shows how celestial names influenced folk traditions, rituals, and the classification of weekdays and cardinal directions. By tracing the etymology and symbolic meanings of these names, the study highlights their role in preserving Central Asian cosmological and spiritual heritage.*

KEYWORDS: *Uzbek Cosmonyms; Celestial Names; Mythological Symbols; Avesta; Historical Linguistics; Cultural Semantics; Ethnocultural Worldview; Turkic Astronomy; Oral Folklore; Comparative Mythology.*

Cosmonyms in the Uzbek language—names of celestial bodies, planets, and constellations—are not only linguistic units denoting astronomical objects but also serve as significant cultural heritage reflecting the historical, ethnocultural, and mythological worldview of the people. Uzbek cosmonyms such as "Yetti Qaroqchi" (Seven Robbers), "Temir Qoziq" (Iron Stake), "Cho'lpon" (Venus), "Zuhra" (Venus), "Mirrix" (Mars), "Quyosh" (Sun), "Oy" (Moon), and "Tishtrya" (Sirius) illuminate the ancient Turkic peoples' astronomical knowledge, religious beliefs, and cultural interactions.

This section explores the historical-cultural, ethnocultural, and mythological components of Uzbek cosmonyms using sources like the Avesta and comparative examples from Central Asian languages, particularly Turkic (Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Uighur, Karakalpak, Bashkir) and Tajik.

The historical-cultural aspect of Uzbek cosmonyms is rooted in ancient astronomical understanding and intercultural exchanges. Central Asian peoples developed systems for timekeeping, navigation, and agricultural planning based on celestial observations. "Temir Qoziq" (Pole Star), for instance, served as a guide for nomadic Turkic peoples and symbolizes stability and reliability in Uzbek. In Kazakh and Kyrgyz, it is referred to as "Tömir qazıq" and "Altın qazık", respectively, signifying direction and steadiness.

"Quyosh" (Sun) and "Oy" (Moon) reflect ancient Turkic beliefs in nature worship. In Uzbek epics, the Sun represents life, light, and divine power. Its Tajik counterpart "Khursheed" demonstrates Persian and Arabic cultural influences. A 13th-century manuscript "Solnoma" assigns each planet to a day of the week: Sunday – Shams (Sun), Monday – Qamar (Moon), Tuesday – Mirrix (Mars), Thursday – Zuhra (Venus), highlighting Central Asian cosmological systems.

The Avesta contains hymns—"Khursheed Yasht" and "Moh Yasht"—dedicated to the deified Sun and Moon. The Sun is described as "Mitra" (Mehr), a symbol of light and sanctity. The term "Mehr" appears in Uzbek literature, such as in the works of Alisher Navoi and Ogahi: "Mehr nuri teng tushar vayronu obod ustina".

Ethnoculturally, Uzbek cosmonyms evolved in connection with agriculture and pastoral life. "Chulpan" (Venus) symbolizes love and hope in poetry and is known as "Sholpan" in Kazakh, "Cholpon" in Kyrgyz, and "Cholpan" in Uighur. The name is tied to practical life, indicating herding times. The Turkic origin suggests the meaning "shepherd's star".

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"Yetti Qaroqchi" (Big Dipper) serves as a directional symbol in nomadic life. In Kyrgyz and Kazakh, it's called "Jeti Qaraqchy" and "Jeti Qaraqshy", reflecting heroism and orientation. The Avesta refers to this constellation as "Hafturang" (Seven Signs), signifying its sanctity. In Uzbek, synonymous forms like "og'ayni" and "cho'mich" also appear.

"Tishtrya" (Sirius) is sanctified in the Avesta as the god of rain and water. In "Tir Yasht", its rising is linked to rain and flooding: "Let our prayers be to Tishtrya with gratitude". In Uzbekistan, it is linked to the "Sust Xotin" rain-invoking ceremony in Bukhara and Khorezm. This shows continuity between mythological beliefs and modern customs.

Mythologically, Uzbek cosmonyms are closely tied to the Avesta and Turkic mythology. Planets and stars are seen as divine powers. "Nohid" (Venus) corresponds to the Avestan goddess Ardvisura Anahita, guardian of water, nature, and women. This name appears as "Nohid", "Zuhra", and "Cho'lpon" in Uzbek. Navoi uses "Nohid" to refer to Venus: "Ne Birjisu qayu Nohid, Khurshid".

"Bahrom" (Mars) is linked with the Avestan god Vahram, symbolizing war, justice, and victory. In Uzbek, "Bahrom" and "Mirrix" derive from the Arabic "mis" (red). Mahmud Kashgari calls Mars "Baqir so'qum" (Copper Arrow), referencing its red hue. In Khorezm dialects, "baqir" still means copper coin, indicating linguistic traces of mythology.

"Mirrix" (Mars) and "Mushtariy" (Jupiter) originate from Arabic and Persian, reflecting Islamic culture. "Mirrix" means "red light", and "Mushtariy" symbolizes wisdom. In the Avesta, Mars is depicted as "Bahrom", protector of war and justice, demonstrating synonymic variety.

"Tishtrya" (Sirius) is especially prominent in Uzbek cosmonymy. The Avesta names it the brightest star after the Sun. The "Tir Yasht" hymn describes it as a god of rain: "Let our prayers be to Tishtrya with gratitude, accompanied by stars along the Milky Way". In ancient Khorezm and Egypt, its rising predicted natural events like Nile flooding. In ancient Italy, its appearance marked summer heat and school recesses, giving rise to the word "canicule" from Latin "canis" (dog).

Since ancient times, people studied celestial movements to organize life—agriculture, livestock, rainfall, and direction. These insights are preserved in week days, months, and cardinal directions. The Persian word "hafta" (week) means "seven days" and reflects beliefs about the world's creation in seven days. The Avesta connects cosmic order with the Sun, Moon, and stars' arrangement. The "Solnoma" manuscript links days of the week to planets: Sunday – Shams (Sun), Monday – Qamar (Moon), Tuesday – Mirrix (Mars), Wednesday – Utorud (Saturn), Thursday – Mushtariy (Mercury), Friday – Zuhra (Venus), Saturday – Zuhal (Jupiter). In Uzbek and other Turkic languages, these names persist.

In European languages, weekday names also derive from cosmonyms. In French: "Lundi" (Moon day), "Mardi" (Mars day), "Jeudi" (Jupiter day); in English: "Sunday", "Monday", "Saturday". In Hindi: "Ravivar" (Sun day), "Somvar" (Moon day), "Mangalvar" (Mars day), noted by Abu Rayhan Biruni in his work "India". In Tajik: "Dushanbe" (second day, Moon day), "Seshanbe" (third day, Mars day) reflect Persian influence.

Uzbek cardinal directions also relate to cosmonyms, grounded in Zoroastrianism. In the Avesta: "Arezakhi" (east), "Savakhi" (west), "Vidadavniz" (northwest), "Fradadafshu" (northeast), "Vorufjareshti" (southwest), "Voruboreshti" (southeast). Though simplified to "sharq", "g'arb", "shimol", and "janub" in Uzbek, poetic expressions like "sunrise side", "sunset side", and "Temir Qoziq side" (north) survive. Kyrgyz uses "chyg'ish" (east), "batysh" (west), and Kazakh has "shyǵys" and "batys", all referencing solar movement. In Karakalpak, "kün shyǵys" (east) and "kün batys" (west) reflect practical applications in daily life.

CONCLUSION

Uzbek cosmonyms and cardinal directions embody a blend of historical, ethnocultural, and mythological traits. Names like "Quyosh", "Zuhra", "Yetti Qaroqchi", "Tishtrya", and directions like "Arezakhi" and "Savakhi" showcase the astronomical knowledge, spiritual beliefs, and cultural connections of Turkic and Iranian peoples. These names persist in weekdays, folklore, and rituals, revealing the rich legacy of Uzbek cosmogony. Studying their etymology and naming conventions offers valuable insights for linguistics and cultural studies.

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