



## Typology Of Women's Images In The Uzbekistan Heroic Epic And Their Educational Content

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### ABSTRACT

The article proposes an integral typology of female characters in the Uzbek heroic epic based on the material of the epics "Alpomish" and "Rustamkhon". On the criteria of the character's family and social status, her function within the plot, and the moral value she embodies, four types are distinguished: the mother (Huroyim), the faithful beloved (Barchin, Oftoboy), the devoted helper (Khimchaoyim, Tovka, Qaldirghoch, the forty bondwomen), and the negative "maston" character (Momagul, Surkhayil). The value embodied by each type and its educational function are determined through quotations from the epic texts and the analysis of episodes. It is substantiated that the "anti-ideal" mechanism of the negative character forms a criterion of moral judgement in the young generation through polarisation with the positive characters. Since the devoted-helper type includes bondwomen, the necessity of a critical interpretation of this group is emphasised separately. Possibilities of applying the typology in literature lessons, educational hours and family upbringing are shown. The conclusions are significant for the theory of national upbringing and for the study of the pedagogical potential of folklore.

**KEYWORDS:** Heroic epic, female character, typology, "Alpomish", "Rustamkhon", anti-ideal, educational function, national upbringing.

### INTRODUCTION

Folklore is one of the most ancient and natural sources of education for the younger generation. In epics, fairy tales and songs, the moral ideas of the people about man, family and society are preserved in the form of artistic images; these images serve as an example and warning for generations.

The Uzbek heroic epic has been studied in folklore for a long time and consistently. The studies of V.M. Zhirmunsky and H.T. Zarifov identify the comparative and historical foundations of the epic "Alpomish" [3], J. Eshonkul reveals the mechanisms of interpretation of the folklore image [10], and B. Jumaniyozov specifically studies the genesis of the image of the drunkard-drunkard [4].

In existing works, female images are usually analyzed separately or within the plot of the epic. The holistic typology of female images, that is, the description of the mother, faithful wife, loyal assistant and negative images as an interconnected system, and the educational functions of this system have not been sufficiently revealed. In particular, the didactic function of the secondary female image and the negative image are poorly studied; while it is precisely the comparison of positive and negative poles that creates an effective mechanism of folk pedagogy. Also, the issue of the historicity of social relations in the epic text and the limits of transferring behavioral patterns formed within these relations to modern education has not been specifically considered.

This article proposes a typology of four types of female images in the Uzbek heroic epic based on the material of the epics "Alpomish" and "Rustamkhon" and identifies the value and educational function expressed by each type. The analysis is based on the description of quotes and episodes from the epic text; the conclusions are evaluated from the point of view of the possibility of applying them to national educational practice. The scientific novelty of the article is seen in the separation of four types based on a single system of criteria and the description of their educational functions in their interrelation.

A comparative analysis of the texts of the two epics shows that female images are not a random collection, but a stable system. The separation of the system is based on three criteria: the family and social status of the image, its function in the plot and the moral value it expresses. Based on these criteria, four types are distinguished: the image of the mother (Khuroyim), the faithful lover (Barchin, Oftoboy), the loyal assistant (Khimchaoyim, Tovka, Kaldirgoch, forty maids) and the image of the negative "drunkard" (Momagul, Surkhayil). The typology is repeated almost identically in the two epics, which confirms its stability at the level of the epic tradition.

An important feature of typology is its completeness. Even within the framework of one epic, all the main types of the image of a woman are combined: in "Rustamkhan" the mother (Khuroyim), the faithful lover (Oftoboy), the assistant (Khimchaoyim, the forty-year-old maid) and the negative image (Momagul maston) coexist. This completeness is not accidental: the people do not idealize a woman one-sidedly, but show her various social roles and moral manifestations. Therefore, the typology reflects both the vitality of folklore and its orientation towards a didactic goal. The stability of the types is confirmed by comparative evidence. The two epics were formed in different periods and have different genre natures: in "Rustamkhan" the theme of family, mother and child is central, while in "Alpomish" the idea of struggle for the lover, for the people is dominant. Nevertheless, the same four types are noted in both texts, and the values they express practically do not change. This indicates that the moral core of the national female ideal has long been preserved within the epic tradition [4]. The difference in the nature of the genre is reflected in the relative weight of the types within the text: in the first epic, the image of the mother occupies a priority place, in the second, the image of the faithful lover.

**Table 1. Typology of female images in the Uzbek heroic epic**

| Type             | Representatives                             | Value expressed                        | Educational function                                             |
|------------------|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Mother           | Khuroyim                                    | Motherly love, purity, patience        | Directing the child to maturity, glorifying the mother's dignity |
| Faithful partner | Barchin, Oftoboy                            | Loyalty, chastity, honor               | Forming marital and family loyalty                               |
| Loyal helper     | Khimchaoyim, Tovka, Kaldirgoch, forty maids | Loyalty, justice, humanity, solidarity | Instilling a culture of social relations                         |



| Type               | Representatives    | Value expressed                                 | Educational function                             |
|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Negative ("drunk") | Momagul, Surkhayil | Cunning, slander, revenge (reproachable traits) | "A counter-ideal": warning against bad qualities |

The image of the mother is at the center of the typology. In the epic "Rustamkhan", Sultankhan, going on a long journey, entrusts the management of the country to his pregnant wife, Khuraim; this detail shows the woman not only as a householder, but also as a subject of social responsibility. The dramatic climax of the epic is connected with the slander organized against Khuraim: a drunkard hired by two childless concubines accuses her through a forged letter, and the innocent mother is sentenced to death. Even under the gallows, she does not take the blame and openly declares her right: "Innocent, do not give up your right even in the face of injustice and believes in the restoration of justice." The quote reveals the moral core of the image of the mother: she does not give up her right even in the face of injustice and believes in the restoration of justice. At the end of the epic, the motif of the mother's prayer completes the entire plot - the happiness of the child and the bride is linked to the mother's consent. This is an artistic confirmation of the national-pedagogical rule that "mother is the first mentor", which is directly consistent with the idea of the priority of family and maternal upbringing in the teachings of A. Avloni [1]. The image of Huroyim, thus, combines the values of patience, purity, perseverance and maternal love at one point.

A perfect example of the type of loyal friend is Barchin in the epic "Alpomish". Instead of surrendering to a group of alps who have come to Sovchilik, Barchin himself determines the rules of the game: he announces four tests consisting of racing, archery, coin tossing and wrestling: "I have four conditions, I will touch the one who fulfills these four conditions... I will touch the one who has defeated ninety alps in wrestling, I will touch the one who has a light arm" [2, 117-118-b].

The motive of the condition expresses the intellectual maturity of a woman and her conscious control of her own destiny: Barchin both wins time and chooses a suitable partner based on clear criteria. She is not a passive object, but an active subject who openly expresses her will in poetic speech. During the period when Ultontaz came to power, this activity turns into loyalty: during the seven-year separation, Barchin resolutely resists forced marriage - "Let him cry in the name of Alpomish, and not accept Ultontaz at all" [2, 346-b]. Loyalty here goes beyond the scope of personal feelings and becomes a criterion of family and national unity [12]. The image of Oftobay in the epic "Rustamkhan" also belongs to the same type: he consciously chooses his partner through the apple throwing ritual and faithfully waits for his soulmate.

The comparison of the images of the mother and the faithful wife shows the complementarity of the two types. In terms of status, Khuraim is a married mother and queen, Barchin is a girl who has not yet married; in terms of trials, the first faces the threat of slander and death, and the second the threat of forced marriage. Khuraim achieves her goal through patience and moral superiority, Barchin through active will and intelligence. The quality that unites them is loyalty: in one it is manifested as loyalty to children and family, in the other as loyalty to the



wife and covenant. Thus, the two types create a single educational ideal for two stages of a woman's life. The third type - the faithful assistant - performs a supporting role in the plot. Despite being a maid, Himchaoyim dresses up in men's clothing to protect her mistress and plays a decisive role in the rescue of Khuraim. Tovka, the daughter of the Kalmyk king, oversees the justice of trade in Yangibazar and helps Alpomish in prison, overcoming the boundaries of nationality and religion. Kaldyrgoch calls her brother to duty, and during the time of oppression, she works in the desert and raises the family's successor, Yodgor. The image of the Forty Maidens expresses collective sympathy and solidarity: both the maids who accompanied Barchin when he moved, and the maids who followed Khuryam weeping after him when he was hanged, demonstrate a collective moral attitude towards injustice.

Structurally and functionally, these images perform the "auxiliary" function distinguished by V.Ya. Propp [7]; however, pedagogical analysis sees in them something more than a plot device - the embodiment of a certain moral value. Their common feature is the superiority of moral virtue over social status: the maid, the daughter of an enemy country, and the oppressed sister are depicted on the same moral high ground. This is an expression of the folk view that a person's worth is determined by his or her actions, not by birth or class.

At the same time, it is necessary to critically evaluate this type. The faithful helpers include the concubines - Himchaoyim, Suqsur, forty concubines - whose loyalty was historically formed in conditions of dependency. The epic text glorifies this loyalty as a moral virtue, but does not problematize the social inequality that created it. Therefore, it is inappropriate to directly transfer these images to modern education: the content that should be learned from them - standing by in difficult times, loyalty to promises and sympathy - should be separated from obedience and subordination, and the historical context of the text should be clearly explained to the reader.

The fourth type is the negative image of a woman, the so-called "drunk". In "Rustamkhan", the drunkard Momagul is presented as the leader of three hundred and sixty drunkards, a plotter for money; his forged letter brings an innocent mother to the brink of death. In "Alpomish", the drunkard Surkhail, in order to avenge his sons, seeks to forcibly marry Barchin and destroy Alpomish; he turns beauty into a weapon of intrigue and deceives the princes by pretending to be a poor old woman.

The two images form one archetype - the "cunning drunken old woman" type; this type is genetically linked to the images of the sly and the witch [4]. At the same time, there is a difference between them: Momagul's evil is explained by material gain, while Surkhayil's is explained by personal revenge. In both cases, the mind is directed not to goodness, but to an evil goal; the epic thus emphasizes the need for the harmony of reason and morality. In the image of Surkhayil, moreover, a distorted image of maternal love is given: maternal grief turns into revenge, directly opposing the positive image of the mother. The pedagogical function of the negative image is explained by the mechanism of the "opposite ideal". If the positive image serves as a model to be imitated, the negative image is a contradictory model to be rejected. The effectiveness of the mechanism depends on two conditions. First, the negative image is presented side by side with the positive image: the purity of Khuraim is compared with the cunning of Momagul, the loyalty of Barchin with the intrigue of Surkhail; this comparison clearly shows the moral criterion. Secondly, the negative image is never glorified and is inevitably exposed at the end of the epic. K.D. Ushinsky emphasizes the importance of a negative

example in education, along with a positive one [8]; the epic text implements this principle in artistic form. The educational significance of the negative image is preserved in modern conditions. In an era of increased information flow and an increase in various sources of influence, the formation of moral immunity in young people against slander, envy, hypocrisy and violence is an urgent task. The epic text solves this task not with abstract admonitions, but by showing a clear plot and outcome: the listener consistently observes the tragedy that the conspiracy will lead to and its inevitable exposure. At the same time, a balance is necessary in the interpretation - the negative image is never presented as an interesting example, but only as an object of condemnation and warning.

Together, the four types form a holistic educational system. The image of the mother instills the values of family and upbringing, the faithful spouse - the values of marriage, chastity and honor, the loyal assistant - the culture of social relations - loyalty, justice, humanity and solidarity; the negative image forms the criterion of moral assessment and the ability to refrain from bad qualities. The pedagogical value of the system lies precisely in its entirety: each type does not stand alone, but acquires full meaning when compared with the others.

Typology can be applied to educational practice in several ways. If the analysis of images in literature lessons is systematized by types, the student will learn a system of values, not a separate hero. Discussions based on comparing positive and negative images in educational lessons develop the skill of moral assessment. In family education, the images of a mother and a faithful wife can become a topic for intergenerational dialogue. This approach is consistent with the view that sees national and spiritual heritage as a factor in the upbringing of youth.

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