WOMEN‟S COURAGE IN SAMPLES OF FOLK ORAL LITERATURE

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Abstract. This article analyzes the representation of women"s courage and heroism in samples of Uzbek folk oral literature. From proverbs and folk songs to large epic works, women are portrayed not only as symbols of kindness and motherhood but also as brave defenders of family, honor, and homeland. The article examines female characters such as Qaldirg„ochoyim, Oybarchin, Guloyim, and Huroyim, who demonstrate intelligence, determination, and leadership. Through these images, folk literature reflects the important role of women in preserving national unity and contributing to the development of society.

Keywords: folk oral literature, proverbs, epics, women"s courage, Qaldirg‘ochoyim, Oybarchin, Guloyim, Huroyim.

Introduction. Since the emergence of human civilization, the image of the mother and the role of women have been highly respected in society. Women have always been considered the foundation of family, culture, and moral values. In Uzbek culture, this respect is clearly reflected in folklore and oral literary traditions.

As emphasized in the work *“From National Revival to National Progress”* by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev, respect for women and recognition of their social role is one of the important values of national development. This idea is also deeply rooted in Uzbek folk oral literature.

Folk literature, created by the collective wisdom of the people, includes proverbs, songs, legends, and epics that reflect the worldview, traditions, and social ideals of the nation. Many of these works depict women as brave, wise, and determined individuals who actively participate in the life of their communities.

Women‟s Images in Folk Proverbs and Epics. In Uzbek folk proverbs, women are described as the protectors of family honor and the continuation of the nation. For example, proverbs such as *“If a flower grows, it beautifies the land; if a girl grows, she beautifies the nation”* and *“A good daughter is the honor of the home”* emphasize the high social value of women.

The epic **“Alpomish”**, one of the greatest monuments of Uzbek folklore, vividly illustrates female courage. In this epic, the character of **Qaldirg„ochoyim** plays an important role. When Alpomish hesitates after reading Barchin’s letter, Qaldirg‘ochoyim boldly encourages him to act bravely and rescue his beloved. Her determination demonstrates the strength of character and moral courage of Uzbek

women. Another significant female character in the epic is **Oybarchin**, who is portrayed as a strong and intelligent young woman. Her courage is demonstrated when she confronts Kokaman, one of the Kalmyks, and defeats him. Moreover, when she asks for six months of time and later sets equal conditions for all suitors, she shows wisdom, independence, and a strong sense of justice despite her young age.

The epic **"Forty Girls"** (*Qirq qiz*) also presents a remarkable example of women's bravery. Led by **Guloyim**, the girls unite and fight heroically to defend their homeland. This story symbolizes patriotism, solidarity, and the strength of women in times of danger.

Similarly, in the epic **"Rustamkhan"**, the character **Huroyim** demonstrates leadership and intelligence. When Sultan Khan leaves the country, Huroyim successfully manages state affairs and maintains stability in the kingdom. Her role highlights the political and social capability of women in traditional narratives

Conclusion. In Uzbek folk oral literature, women are portrayed not only as symbols of love and compassion but also as courageous, wise, and determined individuals. These literary images show that women have always played an important role in the formation of society, the preservation of national identity, and the development of the country.

It is widely acknowledged that the moral and spiritual level of a nation is closely connected with the education and cultural development of its women. Therefore, providing opportunities for girls to receive quality education and become active members of society remains an essential task today.

The heroic and inspirational images of women in folk literature continue to serve as an important source of moral education and cultural identity for future generations.

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