The Role of Comparative Typology in the Teaching Epic Motives of Folk Epics

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ABSTRACT

Nowadays, when Uzbekistan is the equal member of the world society, it is not enough to learn only Uzbek literature. Being aware of the best samples of the world folklore created in different historical-literary periods makes possible for the pupils to understand the national peculiarity of the Uzbek literature. On the other hand, it enriches their knowledge about the culture, outlook, hopes, and mentality of the other nations. There was provided the topicality of the role in the spiritual perfection of mankind and studying the tasks of artistry and esthetics as well as poetry of epics of Oriental people in this article.

There were also researched observation of relatively closeness of symbols, styles, philosophical essence, ideas of Uzbek popular epics with Indian epics and the effectiveness of teaching them by comparing in the educational stages.

Keywords: literary-comparative analysis, effective methods, education process, Oriental commonality, national self-consciousness, perfect man, protective characters.

Introduction: Today scholars across the world have begun studying epics and eposes as source of not only folklore but also philosophy, history and belles-lettres. Studying epics and eposes is to conduct research on people’s history, its customs and traditions, feelings, its present and future. They reflect national self-consciousness, features of self-representation, aspirations, lifestyle and mentality. Popular epics which survived historical disturbances, lethal ordeals, reflecting our people’s tolerance, steadfastness, generosity, faithfulness and loyalty are the pride of our brave and good-natured people. In the core of our national epics there are poetic interpretations of processes which took place in our land for many centuries BC, the expression of embodiment of our peoples mental features are clarified through retrieving of mythological and historical and vital roots of plots and leading motives which serve as their basis.

Main part: Literature is the type of art which seriously affects the feelings of the man and forms his spiritual world. Its particularity is that its object of research is a literary work, which is an example of the word art. The main purpose of the studying the literature is to raise a healthy, ethically and morally perfect, responsible person, who respects universal values, and the main function is to make the pupils love the literature, to bring up them as people who read, understand and analyze books, and can express their opinion properly orally and in a written way.¹

Heroes of many epics are generous, brave, good-natured, sturdy-build, flawless, wise and liberal young men. Since the poetic genius of the people tried to create a symbol of firm belief and perfect human being. Supreme powers of the Earth and Heaven would always support songs about the lives of these brave young men who embodied numerous virtues and brevity in them. In fact, abilities of a hero must be miraculous to astonish others. The main character of first Hindu epic Ramayana – Rama is a best example. Wisdom, wit, resourcefulness, adroitness and craftiness in the images of heroes of epics Alpomish, Gorogli and Ravshankhon namely Barchinoy, Alpomish, Gorogli, Ravshankhon.

Gorogli, Ravshanbek, Zulkhumor are still attracting the reader until now. Therefore physically strong and spiritually perfect hero of the epic personified the highest ideals of the given people.

In all these works which survived until now due to untiring efforts and authentic performance of the popular Baxshi who have sung common ideas for Oriental peoples such universal values as patriotism, honour and dignity, struggle for the unity of country and belief. As it was stated by Vohid Zohidov, PhD, “A spiritual wealth created by a certain nation makes contribution not only to his nation’s culture but to the culture of other nations as well”\(^2\). Indeed, as the pearls of Oriental artistry have common origin we share commonality in our history and struggles, traditions and thoughts. In particular, symbols, the style, its philosophic essence and ideological content of Ramayana, which was created by genius of Hindu peoples two and a half thousands years ago is very close to Uzbek popular epics. Ramayana which is the reflection of such ideas as glorification of human being, faithfulness, loyalty was created by a wise man Valmiki with the support of patrons and deities and consists of 24000 shloks. Some sources say that events described in this epic belong to 14\(^{th}\) and 12\(^{th}\) centuries BC. But in our opinion it is not correct to make parallels between the results of artistic creativity and real life events.

The history of creation of foremost work of Uzbek popular creativity namely the epic “Alpomish” also begins from times immemorial. Glorification of human beings in Ramayana, praising them over deities, comprehension of human beings and the world, mutual relationships between them are described in a specific way. For example, the ruler of town of Lanka grants the king of Ayodhya with a child in order to destroy the reign of Ravana who was the warlord of the Div-Rokhas (giants). Therefore even the deities and Divs were weak to confront the terrible Ravana, thus only a human child could defeat Ravana who was ruining the garden of the good and flourishing the garden of evil.

Our observations reveal that the essence of these ideas matches with glorification of human beings and that the angels were commanded to revere them found in Holy Qur’an and Hadiths. There is a statement in the Sura Al-Isro of the Holy Qur’an which says: “Va laqad karramna bani odama”, i.e. that the God Almighty has created human being as a sacred one. According to this concept the main purpose of the God Almighty in his creation of worlds was the Human being. If the world serves as a mirror for the Creator then human being is a mazhar, i.e. a creature who embodies the power and mystery as well as knowledge and miracles of the Creator. Human being is a crown of the Universe. No other creature has ever been granted such intelligence and actions. As the researcher of Tasavvuf N.Komilov states that followers of this concept describe human being as the assistant of the God on Earth, the crown of both worlds and the cream [of creatures].\(^3\) Hence Alisher Navoi wrote: “Odamiy shariful kavnayndur” which means that the human being is the most praised and honorable creature in both worlds.

Not only Alisher Navoiy but also the works of our great ancestors such Yusuf Khos Hojib, Ahmad Yassaviy, Pahlavon Mahmud, So’fi Olloyor and others questioned themselves and had sought answers for philosophical and social issues like - Who is human being? What is the purpose of being? How one should live? consequently refer to the abovementioned statements. If we observe ideological views of tens of scholars of our classical literature such as Boyazid Bistomi, Mansur Khalloj, Ibn Arabiy, Shaykh Aziziiddin Nasafi, Farididdin Attor, Jaloliddin Rumi, Abdurahmon Jomiy, Navoiy and Mashrab we can see that in the nature of pearls of


popular artistry that there is the concept of perfect human being. Ibn Arabiy in his “Futuhati Makkiya” wrote that “There is no perfect creature other than human being. The perfect man in the interpretation of the scholar is the healer of the illneses of the soul and morals. According to the point of view of Ahmad Yassaviy the world is attractive and stable due to perfect human being. Because he possesses good words, good manners and a good knowledge. Also the one who comprehends the essence of the truth. 4

These conclusions are not coincidence. Actually wisdom, wit, adroitness and craftiness are explicitly seen in the characters of the epic Alpomish, the reflection of high ideals of our people, namely Barchinoy and Alpomish. The main hero Alpomish is seen in the epic as physically strong and spiritually perfect one. A special attention is drawn to the description of his strength and brevity. This image is intertwined with heroes of our people’s tales and epics when they set out for journey in search of his beloved one, brevity on this path and adventures. As a rule fairy tales’ heroes fight giants (Div) and men or genii, witches, snakes and scorpions. But in the epic of Alpomish there are descriptions of confrontations with real powers. Similar scenes can also be found in “Ravshankhon”. When Ravshankhon sets out for journey to the land of Korakhon, the ruler of Shirvon, in search of Zulkhumor he also crosses deserts and encounters many obstacles on his way. In general, the purpose of finding a love companion in these epics goes hand in hand with overcoming various obstacles. It is obvious that for the followers of Tasavvuf, who admired such ideas as spiritual perfectness, education, love, beauty and thought as well as idea of original truth, the truth of mankind is Qur’an and the truth of Qur’an is a perfect human being. Alisher Navoi described Farhod who symbolized the image of perfect man:

… whose soul and eyes are pure,
His tongue, words and he himself is pure.
There is no knowledge in the world which he wouldn’t possess,
By knowing he [also] studied them [in order to use].5

As it is written in Ramayana the wise Valmiki has asked the intelligent patron Norada: “Is there a generous, brave, handsome face, physically strong, flawless in appearance man in the entire world?” Norada told him about the lord Rama, son of Dasharatha. As it is seen, people’s poetic genius shows the importance of creation of symbols of firm belief and perfectness. He is supported by both powers of the Earth and Heaven. So the song which Valmiki sings about the hero’s life and brevity is a special praise:

Captives tremble, astonished by his powers,
He is as welcomed in his land as cloud full of rain.
There is no doubt of his perfectness and virtues,
No powerful ruler can ever reach his status.6

Indeed, Rama has a number of virtues. He learned Vedas by heart. He is excellent at shooting with a bow and arrows and riding horse. He always wins in races. He also mastered Yoga. Moreover he has pure soul, generous and wise. That’s why his mind can encompass time and space at the same time. It is meant that the (cap-) abilities of the hero are miraculous to astonish people:

He is Vishnu, the Father God looks like a man,
He has been fulfilling the demands of deities –

Three worlds had lost to him, Rama’s virtues are –
The mind of Brihospati and grandeur of Indra.⁷

In the nature of the mythological heroes, which have covered many stages of perfection in the poetic thought of the people, there is selflessness and they act as rescuers. Such heroes of Ramayana as Kumhakorna, Khanuman who can change his appearance, Ravana, the ruler of the kingdom of rokshas, giant’s brother Kubera have positively influenced to the appearance of some giant heroes of our folklore as Bozirgon, Hasan Kolbar, Alpomish. A helpful giant from Ramayana – wise and generous Vibhishona and his four loyal friends resemble the epic hero from the Kalmyks land certain Korajon with face of Yusuf, as virtuous as Rustam who is bosom friend and fellow traveller of Hakimbek.

Female characters found in epics symbolize patience, faithfulness and loyalty, consciousness, brevity and strong will and their interpretation has profoundly expanded the expression of esthetic ideal. There is a deep meaning in our people’s attempt, which is loyal to a true word, when it has named its heroine Barchin (literally – all is true). Alpomish in Uzbek epic and Sita in Hindu epic are trapped by deception and witchcraft. Suffering can exhaust them and grievance may harm their physique. But popular epics always demonstrate national spirit, its outlook, history and struggles, esthetic mind and high spirituality.

Parallels of archaic plot and motives like infertility, birth of an epic hero and ordeal in the myths, narratives, novels and epics and their expression not only in motives of journey but also the images of patrons, beliefs as well as the individuality of mythopoeic interpretation of semantic chains tied with assisting spirit and commonality are demonstrated. For example, Shokhimardon Pir (a saint, a patron) comes as qalandar (a wandering ascetic) and gives names to children, the over the course of entire epic Hakimbek is assisted by the Prophet, Chahoryor (the Prophet’s four successive deputies) making easier his misfortunes, overcoming travel hardships, etc. Boychibor with almost 10 feet wings is also of divine gifts. In the epic of “Gavdaroz Dev” of Gorogli certain Harishoh seeks assistance, for vengeance, from a giant who understands human language. In his turn, Avazkhon learns humility and ways of defeating giants from Khizr Bobo thus making his enemy a friend.

 sumarizing our ideas, the following diagram is formed:

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⁷ Indra – ruler of thunders and rains, king of Yazdons.
So one can see that divine heroes, images of patrons, everlasting characters, conflicts between the good and evil have inevitably enriched world popular folklores, especially Oriental mythology and epic artistry.

Actually, through these creative and imagination one doesn’t separate himself from natural environment – real world. He only comprehends the reality in the shape of mythology.

The uzbek folklore prepares the people, especially the young in the spirit of national traditions, patriotism, love of freedom, honesty and diligence. That’s why the students are taught the best samples of the Uzbek folklore in the educational stages. The students are required to acquire skills of implementation of the effective methods and technologies to the education process, the ability to choose proper traditional and non-traditional methods and innovative pedagogical technologies while conducting the lesson, to be able to use the methods and technologies creatively, to analyze, summarize the facts and come to a certain conclusion. For instance, in “The sequence of mixed logical chains” method the teacher writes down the heroes of epic literature, their literary details and name of places where key events happened in mixed form. Then he asks pupils to find the written names which epos they belong to, to classify and comment them. In the “Think, search and find” method in which ideas of pupils who are busy with studying the epos in accordance with the lesson plan are listened and discussed.

Conclusion:
Thus it shows that comparative typological teaching of folk epics with other nation’s folk epics, their motifs and images gives good results in the educational stages. Popular epics express the national spirit, its outlook, history and struggles as well as esthetic mind and spirituality. The conduct of a research in the comparative and typological aspects of the pearls of popular creation, which have always stimulated peoples such ideas as believe in the good, hope for better days, truth, justice and loyalty, with epics of other peoples serves to derive new theoretical conclusions in study of folklore. The main goal of the reforms is human, so, humanistic beliefs that these literary heritage contains play an important role in education and upbringing of the new generation.

REFERENCES: