

THE IMAGE OF POETS AND BAKHSHIS IN UZBEK FOLK LEGENDS

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Abstract:

This article explores the artistic and ideological characteristics of the images of poets and bakhshis in Uzbek folk legends. Within these narratives, poets and bakhshis are depicted as carriers of folk wisdom, spiritual strength, and divine inspiration. They embody ideals such as truth, justice, and moral integrity, acting as the voice of the people and preservers of cultural memory. The study emphasizes the folkloric roles, symbolic meanings, and cultural importance of these figures in the context of Uzbek oral tradition.

Keywords: Uzbek folk legends, image of the poet, image of the bakhshi, oral folklore, artistic image, folk wisdom, spirituality.

Uzbek folk legends are considered one of the most important folklore genres that embody the most ancient and stable layers of national artistic thinking. Through this genre, the historical memory, social experience, religious beliefs, and aesthetic ideals of the people have been passed down from generation to generation. Legends are distinguished by their interpretation of reality through a combination of real and mythological elements, which allows them to be valued as an artistic expression of the people's worldview. In particular, the images of poets and bakhshis (epic singers) found in legends clearly demonstrate the high regard of the people for the art of words, oral creativity, and creative individuals.

In legends, the images of poets and bakhshis are interpreted as individuals associated with divine inspiration, spiritually mature, and socially responsible figures. They are portrayed not only as artistic heroes but also as those who listen to the people's concerns, speak the truth boldly, and unite society. Through the images of poets and bakhshis, legends express the people's ideas about justice, goodness, and truth, and reveal the role of the power of words in social life.

In legends, poets and bakhshis are often depicted as individuals who emerged from ordinary people, lived modest lives, but were endowed with divine talent and the gift of speech. Their talent is innate and often manifests through dreams, inspiration, or supernatural events. Such depictions reflect the belief in the divine origin of creativity in the popular consciousness. Through their words, poets and bakhshis express the people's pain, oppose social injustice, and appear as moral leaders in the struggle between good and evil.

Additionally, in legends, poets and bakhshis are portrayed as symbols of wisdom, patience, and spiritual perfection. They are experienced and morally pure individuals who guide society through their words. In some legends, the words of a poet or bakhshi possess miraculous power, awakening people's hearts and uniting them around a common purpose. This demonstrates that their role is not only aesthetic but also socio-spiritual.

Thus, the images of poets and bakhshis in Uzbek folk legends clearly reflect the people's artistic thinking, respect for the art of words, and the tradition of glorifying creative individuals as spiritual leaders. Through these images, the people express their historical memory, social ideals, and moral values in artistic form.

In Uzbek folklore traditions, the formation and development of the bakhshi image are closely connected with epic storytelling schools. Traditions formed in regions such as Bulungur,



Qo'rg'on, Narpay, and Khorezm are distinguished by their unique performance styles, rich repertoire, and artistic interpretation. These schools not only ensured the continuity of oral creativity but also contributed to the formation of the bakhshi image as a stable symbol in the people's consciousness. Each regional school established its own aesthetic and ethical standards for the bakhshi, which led to the diverse yet spiritually unified depiction of this image in legends.

In legends, the bakhshi appears not only as a performer of epics but also as an important social figure who transmits history, ancestral memory, and national values across generations. The bakhshi is closely connected with the people, sharing their joys and sorrows, and is depicted as a wise individual. Through epics and songs, they preserve historical memory and strengthen spiritual unity. Thus, the bakhshi is interpreted not just as a performer but as a spiritual leader and the inner voice of the people.

The image of the poet, on the other hand, is more associated with inspiration, divine power, and spiritual purity. The poet's word is endowed with miraculous force, capable of influencing the human soul, awakening society, and leading it toward moral perfection. Poets are portrayed as fearless truth-tellers who use the power of words in the pursuit of justice. Their творчество (creativity) becomes a reflection of the people's spirit and a symbol of resistance against injustice.

In some legends, the image of the poet is linked with historical figures, whose lives and творчество are elevated to a legendary level. Such interpretations serve to immortalize the poet in the collective memory through artistic idealization. As a result, the poet becomes not only a literary figure but also a symbol of national spirituality and culture.

Although the images of poets and bakhshis are closely related, each performs a distinct artistic function in legends, expressing the people's respect for verbal art, historical memory, and moral values.

Moreover, these images are often interpreted as symbols of hope and salvation during times of social instability and moral crisis. In such contexts, poets and bakhshis serve as sources of inspiration, uniting people through words, music, and wisdom. They awaken society from indifference, strengthen willpower, and instill hope for the future.

In legends, their activities are often directed against injustice, inequality, and moral decline. The word of the poet and the music of the bakhshi function not merely as aesthetic phenomena but as powerful social tools shaping public consciousness and uniting communities. Thus, they become symbolic representations of resilience and moral strength.

In conclusion, the images of poets and bakhshis in Uzbek folk legends reflect a deep respect for the art of words and the tradition of elevating creative individuals as spiritual leaders. Through these images, the people express their historical experience, social views, and ethical standards in artistic form. Poets and bakhshis appear not only as sources of aesthetic pleasure but also as key figures in preserving national identity, historical memory, and spiritual heritage. Therefore, these images are an integral part of Uzbek folklore and serve as an important source for studying the artistic thinking and spiritual world of the people.

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