

## ARTISTIC PRINCIPLES OF CREATING THE IMAGE OF A LEGENDARY HERO IN WORLD LITERATURE

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17596175>

**Nasrullayeva Umida Baxrom qizi**

*Namangan davlat chet tillari instituti*

### **Annotation**

This article analyzes the artistic principles of creating legendary hero images in world literature. Legendary heroes are formed in the collective consciousness as symbolic representations of national identity, historical memory, and universal values. The study examines such principles as symbolism, the harmony of national and universal features, the connection between fantasy and real life, moral and ethical aspects, the combination of historical and mythological layers, the aesthetic ideal, and the transformation of the hero's image across different epochs. Examples include Heracles in Greek mythology, King Arthur in English literature, Alpamysh among Turkic peoples, and Prometheus in European Romanticism. The research demonstrates that the image of the legendary hero not only reflects the historical and spiritual heritage of a nation but also serves as an aesthetic ideal embodying universal human values. Keywords: legendary hero, symbolism, nationality, universality, myth, comparative analysis

### **Аннотация**

В данной статье рассматриваются художественные принципы создания образа легендарного героя в мировой литературе. Легендарные герои формируются в народном сознании как символическое воплощение национальной самобытности, исторической памяти и общечеловеческих ценностей. Анализируются такие принципы, как символизм, единство национального и общечеловеческого, сочетание фантастики и реальной жизни, морально-этическое содержание, взаимодействие исторического и мифологического пластов, эстетический идеал, а также трансформация образа героя в разные эпохи. В качестве примеров рассматриваются Геракл в греческой мифологии, король Артур в английской литературе, Алпамыш у тюркских народов, а также Прометей в европейском романтизме. Исследование показывает, что образ легендарного героя отражает не только историко-духовное наследие народа, но и выступает как эстетический идеал, воплощающий универсальные ценности человечества.

### **Ключевые слова**

легендарный герой, символизм, национальное, общечеловеческое, миф, сравнительный анализ.

Throughout the development of world literature, the image of the legendary hero has always remained one of the central themes. In the oral traditions of every nation, in ancient written monuments, as well as in later literary works, the heroic image has been created in various forms. Legendary heroes embody humanity's aspirations for courage, justice, patriotism, freedom, and goodness. Therefore, they occupy an important place not only within the framework of national literature but also in the entire cultural heritage of the world. The relevance of this topic lies in the fact that even in today's process of globalization, humanity continues to rely on shared values. Through legendary heroes, one can understand a people's national spirit, historical memory, and moral norms. In their symbolic images are embodied ideas that unite humanity. For this reason, a scholarly analysis of the artistic principles behind the creation of the legendary hero's image is considered an important task in literary studies.

**The Legendary Hero** A legendary hero is an ideal figure that embodies humanity's noble aspirations in folklore, myths, epics, and written literature. This hero often reflects human strength and abilities in an exaggerated manner, carries symbolic meaning, and plays a significant role in the process of national self-awareness. The concept of a hero has changed historically: at first, it was a mythological image, later real historical figures also became legendary. For instance, Alexander the Great (Iskandar Zulqarnayn), Alp Er Tunga, and Genghis Khan were transformed into legendary heroes in the memory of the people.

**Heroes in Ancient Mythology** Legendary hero images were widespread in the mythology of the ancient world. For example:

**Gilgamesh** (Babylonian literature) – the king in search of the secret of eternal life

**Heracles** (Greek mythology) – the symbol of strength and endurance;

**Odysseus** – the embodiment of intelligence and ingenuity.

These heroes embodied the virtues that humanity valued from ancient times – courage, wisdom, strength, and perseverance.

**Heroic Epics and Folklore** National epics shaped heroes in the spirit of the people. For instance:

**Beowulf** (Anglo-Saxon epic) – the hero who fought against dragons and evil forces;

**Alpomish** (Uzbek folk epic) – the warrior defending the honor of his people;

**Manas** (Kyrgyz epic) – the symbol of national unity and patriotism.

The heroes of oral folklore were later reinterpreted in written literature, theater, and other forms of art, becoming established as enduring literary images.

### The Main Principles of Creating a Legendary Hero in World Literature

The creation of the legendary hero in the history of literature is a complex and multilayered process that developed on the basis of common patterns across different periods and cultures. The image of heroes usually stands out by expressing symbolic, moral, national, and universal ideas. Below are the main artistic principles. The image of a legendary hero does not represent an ordinary human being, but rather conveys lofty ideas in a symbolic form. The hero's bravery, strength, intelligence, and devotion are all symbols that embody the values of humanity.

**Heracles** in Greek mythology symbolizes strength and endurance. His twelve labors represent not only human potential but also the attainment of perfection through trials.

**Beowulf** becomes the embodiment of goodness as a defender who struggles against the forces of evil and darkness.

**Alpomish is the symbol of the Uzbek people's national honor and their striving for freedom. The Unity of National and Universal Values**

Legendary heroes reflect the national identity of each people. At the same time, they embody the common aspirations of humanity as a whole.

**King Arthur** holds an important place in history as a symbol of English national unity, yet his image as a just ruler can serve as an example for all nations.

**Rustam** (in Persian-Tajik literature) is a symbol of national strength and courage, while also expressing human loyalty and devotion.

**Manas** is the symbol of Kyrgyz national unity, and his heroism promotes universal ideas of justice and freedom. This principle shows that the image of a hero combines both the national spirit and values shared by all humanity.

### The Conflict Between Good and Evil

The image of the hero is revealed most vividly in the process of struggle. The hero defends goodness by confronting evil forces. This opposition is one of the oldest motifs in literature.

**Gilgamesh**, in his quest for eternal life, faces the forces of nature.

**Beowulf** battles dragons and evil creatures, protecting society from destruction.

**Alpomish** in the Uzbek epic fights bravely against the enemies of his people. Through this conflict, moral standards are reinforced in literature, and the triumph of justice is promoted.

**Idealization and Exaggeration** The legendary hero is usually depicted in an idealized manner. His strength, intellect, and courage are portrayed as far beyond those of ordinary people.

**Heracles'** labors are described in an exaggerated way, portraying him as accomplishing tasks no ordinary human could achieve.

**Rustam's** martial power and loyalty are represented at an ideal level.

**Alpomish's** bravery, endurance, and patriotism embody the highest qualities desired by the people.

#### The Hero's Formation Through Trials

The image of a legendary hero often emerges through the process of difficulties and trials, which reveal both the inner and outer strengths of the character.

**Odysseus**, during his long journey, passes through numerous trials, achieving his goal through intelligence and determination.

**Gilgamesh**, in his arduous quests, ultimately discovers the deeper meaning of life.

In the epic of **Alpomish**, the hero overcomes countless obstacles and defends the national ideal of freedom and independence.

Through such trials, the hero attains perfection and becomes an enduring source of inspiration for the people.

#### Moral and Spiritual Perfection

A legendary hero is characterized not only by physical strength but also by elevated moral and spiritual qualities.

**King Arthur** exemplifies justice and moral authority as the model of a righteous ruler.

**Rustam** and **Alpomish** symbolize loyalty and devotion to the homeland and their people.

**Odysseus** embodies wisdom, intellect, and perseverance.

This moral perfection elevates the hero beyond ordinary human limits, ensuring his eternal place in the cultural memory of the people.

#### Artistic Principles in the Creation of the Legendary Hero

The creation of the legendary hero in world literature is a complex and multifaceted process. It encompasses **symbolism, the unity of national and universal values, the conflict between good and evil, idealization and exaggeration, the hero's formation through trials, and moral-spiritual perfection.** These principles have immortalized legendary heroes not only as literary figures but also as an enduring part of humanity's cultural and spiritual heritage.

## Legendary Heroes in the Literatures of Different Nations

Legendary heroes are represented in unique forms within the literature of every nation. Their primary function is to embody the spirit, aspirations, and historical experiences of a people, while simultaneously reflecting universal human ideals. The following provides an overview of heroic figures in different literary traditions.

### Legendary Heroes in Eastern Literature

In the oral traditions and written works of Eastern civilizations, heroic images are closely tied to the values of freedom, patriotism, and the struggle for independence.

**Rustam**, the central hero of Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh* in Persian-Tajik literature, embodies courage, patriotism, justice, and loyalty. His battles demonstrate not only physical might but also moral superiority.

**Alp Er Tunga**, the ancient Turkic epic hero, is immortalized in the elegy *Marsiya of Alp Er Tunga*, representing the image of a brave commander devoted to his homeland and people.

**Alpomish**, one of the most celebrated figures in Uzbek epic tradition, personifies the national ideal through his bravery against enemies, unwavering loyalty, and pursuit of justice. In Eastern literature, legendary heroes are often portrayed as guardians of national unity, defenders of the people, and champions of justice.

In Western literature as well, heroic images are widely present. From ancient Greek and Roman mythology to later European literary traditions, the hero appears in diverse forms and interpretations, reflecting both cultural distinctiveness and shared human values.

### Legendary Heroes in Western Literature

**Achilles** – one of the most famous heroes in Greek mythology. In *The Iliad*, he is depicted as a symbol of bravery, strength, and glory. At the same time, his tragic fate reflects the transience of human life.

**Odysseus** – an embodiment of wisdom, cleverness, and determination. In *The Odyssey*, he undergoes long trials and finally returns to his homeland, Ithaca.

**Beowulf** – the hero of Anglo-Saxon literature. He defends his people by fighting against dragons and evil forces.

**King Arthur** – a symbol of national unity and justice in English literature. The legends about him and the Knights of the Round Table express ideas of loyalty, justice, devotion, and the struggle against evil.

In Western literature, heroes often embody not only personal courage but also duty to the state and people.

## Legendary Heroes in Near Eastern Literature

In ancient Mesopotamian and Arabic literature, heroes reflect humanity's philosophical quest concerning life, death, and immortality.

**Gilgamesh** – the hero of the earliest written epic. In his search for eternal life, he realizes the transience of human existence and discovers that the true value lies in human life itself.

**Alexander the Great (Iskandar Zulqarnayn)** – a legendary figure found in the literatures of many peoples. Sometimes he is depicted as a world conqueror, other times as a just ruler.

**Antarah ibn Shaddad** – a renowned hero of Arabic literature. Remembered as a courageous warrior, poet, and patriot, he holds a permanent place in the memory of his people.

In Near Eastern literature, heroes often emerge through the search for answers to philosophical questions about the meaning of life, human duty, and justice.

### Comparative Analysis

Similarities and differences exist among the legendary heroes of different nations:

**Similarities:** In all traditions, heroes defend goodness and justice, embody the national aspirations of their people, and achieve perfection through trials.

**Differences:** In Eastern literature, the hero is more focused on national unity and defense of the homeland; in Western literature, individual courage and personal qualities are emphasized; in Near Eastern literature, the hero is often associated with philosophical reflection on the meaning of life.

Thus, although legendary heroes appear in diverse forms across the literatures of various nations, they are united by common principles: defending the people, spreading goodness, and upholding justice. In Eastern traditions, heroes such as Rustam, Alpomish, and Alp Er Tunga strengthened the national spirit; in Western traditions, Achilles, Odysseus, Beowulf, and King Arthur embodied personal bravery and state unity; while in Near Eastern traditions, heroes like Gilgamesh and Alexander expressed the philosophy of life itself.

In this way, the heroic image occupies an enduring place in the shared cultural heritage of humanity.

The image of the legendary hero, as an inseparable part of humanity's cultural heritage, has not lost its significance in the modern era. On the contrary, these heroes have been reinterpreted in accordance with the demands of new times and socio-cultural needs. Since the 19th and 20th centuries, literature, art, cinema, and other cultural fields have recreated heroic images in various new forms.

### Legendary Heroes in 19th–20th Century Literature

In modern literature, new approaches to the image of the hero emerged. Heroes were often reimagined as symbols expressing national identity and promoting social progress.

Lord Tennyson provided a poetic interpretation of the *King Arthur legends*, presenting Arthur as a symbol of the English national spirit.

James Joyce's *Ulysses* is a modern reinterpretation of the Greek hero Odysseus. The author juxtaposed the ancient mythological hero with an ordinary citizen of modern Dublin, creating a new form of the legend.

Abdurauf Fitrat and other Jadid writers of Central Asia also reinterpreted national heroic figures in a modern spirit, calling the people to awakening and progress.

In this period of literature, heroes were portrayed as forces leading nations toward national liberation, independence, and enlightenment.

### **Legendary Heroes in Cinema**

From the second half of the 20th century, cinema played an important role in reviving the image of the hero.

*Troy* (2004) reinterpreted the figures of Achilles and Hector for contemporary audiences.

Numerous films about *King Arthur* (for example, *King Arthur* in 2004) sought to merge ancient legend with historical realism.

Marvel and DC superheroes (Superman, Batman, Thor, Captain America) are, in fact, modern reinterpretations of legendary heroes. For instance, Thor is taken directly from Scandinavian mythology.

### **Reinterpretations in Contemporary Literature**

In 21st-century literature, legendary heroes are often reinterpreted through a postmodernist lens. Many novels create modern versions of ancient heroes. For example, Margaret Atwood's *The Penelopiad* retells the myth of Odysseus from a female perspective.

In Eastern literature as well, heroic epics are being reworked for modern readers. Uzbek writers, for instance, reinterpret the images of Alpomish or Jalaluddin Manguberdi by blending them with ideas of national identity and freedom.

Such reinterpretations present heroes not only as historical or legendary figures, but also as images addressing contemporary moral and social issues.

### **The Artistic and Social Functions of the Hero in the Modern Age**

In today's world, legendary heroes perform several important functions:

**Preservation of historical memory and national identity.** Through heroic figures, nations remember their history and strengthen their national spirit.

**Promotion of education and moral values.** Heroes serve to nurture younger generations with the ideals of patriotism, justice, and courage.

**Fostering global cultural unity.** Through superheroes, representatives of different nations connect to shared values.

**Creative renewal.** Contemporary writers and filmmakers enrich literature and art by reinterpreting ancient heroes in new ways.

The image of the legendary hero has not lost its relevance in the modern era. In 19th–20th century literature, they embodied the ideas of national awakening and independence, while in cinema and 21st-century literature, they have appeared in new, global interpretations. Superheroes can be regarded as modern variants of ancient legendary figures. Thus, legendary heroes do not disappear from humanity’s cultural heritage but continue to live on in renewed forms.

### Conclusion

The artistic principles of creating the image of the legendary hero in world literature have undergone a long process of historical development. Since ancient times, humanity has embodied its hopes, fears, and noble ideals in the figure of the hero. Through heroes, societies established moral norms, strengthened national unity, and preserved historical memory.

Several common principles can be observed in the creation of legendary heroes:

**Symbolism and representation** – heroes are not merely individuals but symbols reflecting the spiritual power and aspirations of the people.

**Harmony of national and universal values** – while each hero embodies the unique values of a particular nation, qualities such as courage, justice, and devotion are universal to all humanity.

**Epic scope and dramatic expression** – in heroic epics and literary works, heroes appear against the backdrop of great events, depicted as forces shaping the destiny of their people.

**Artistic transformation** – every era reinterprets heroes in accordance with its own needs and ideals.

In the 19th–20th centuries, legendary heroes became symbols of national awakening and independence. In the modern era, they have acquired a global dimension in literature, cinema, and popular culture, serving humanity’s shared values in the form of superheroes.

Thus, the image of the legendary hero is an artistic bridge that unites the past with the present, national values with universal ideas, and mythological symbols with contemporary thought.

## REFERENCES:

1. Aristotle. Poetics. Tashkent: G'afur G'ulom Publishing, 1991.
2. Campbell, J. (1949). The Hero with a Thousand Faces. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
3. Frazer, J. G. (1922). The Golden Bough. London: Macmillan.
4. Eliade, M. (1963). Myth and Reality. New York: Harper & Row.
5. Tennyson, A. (1996). Idylls of the King. London: Penguin Classics.
6. Joyce, J. (1990). Ulysses. London: Vintage Classics.
7. Atwood, M. (2005). The Penelopiad. Edinburgh: Canongate Books.
8. Alpomish (Uzbek folk epic). Tashkent: Fan, 1989.
9. Fitrat, A. (1926). O'zbek adabiyoti namunalari [Samples of Uzbek Literature]. Tashkent: Ma'rifat.
10. Qosimov, B. (2005). O'zbek adabiyoti tarixi [History of Uzbek Literature]. Tashkent: O'zbekiston Milliy Ensiklopediyasi.
11. Abrams, M. H. (2012). A Glossary of Literary Terms. Boston: Wadsworth.
12. Lotman, Yu. M. (1992). Semiosfera. Moscow: Iskusstvo.