



CHARACTERISTICS AND NORMS OF EPIC IN PASHTO AND DARI LANGUAGES

(THE WORK OF ARTS)

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Abstract

This article is designed and written to provide you with an array of epics which will empower you with the essential information about them. In this article, preface is first which is followed by body. The body of the article provides you with essential information about epics; that is, introduces you with the principles and standards of epics with examples. Summary and references are the back of the article. So we can say that epic is a long narrative poem, majestic both in theme and style. Epics deal with legendary or historical events of national or universal significance, involving action of broad sweep and grandeur. Most epics deal with the exploits of a single individual, thereby giving unity to the composition. Typically, an epic includes several features: the introduction of supernatural forces that shape the action; conflict in the form of battles or other physical combat; and stylistic conventions such as an invocation to the Muse, a formal statement of the theme, long lists of the protagonists involved, and set speeches couched in elevated language. Common place details of everyday life may appear, but they serve as background for the story and are described in the same lofty style as the rest of the poem. The Greeks distinguished epic from lyric poetry, both by its nature and its manner of delivery; lyric poetry expressed more personal emotion than epic poetry and was sung, whereas epic poetry was recited. Epic poems are not merely entertaining stories of legendary or historical heroes; they summarize and express the nature or ideals of an entire nation at a significant or crucial period of its history. Examples include the ancient Greek epics by the poet Homer, the Iliad and the Odyssey. The characteristics of the hero of an epic are national rather than individual, and the exercise of those traits in heroic deeds serves to gratify a sense of national pride. At other times epics may synthesize the ideals of a great religious or cultural movement.

Keywords: *Epic, Characteristics and Norms of Epic, Historical Significance of Epic, Epic versus Lyric Poems, Epic Structure.*



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Introduction

Throughout my studies about epic in Pashto literature, I found that still many of the researchers and writers do not know the real meaning of epic, so I decided to write a research article about this topic in order to satisfy the doubts of the students and teachers about the presence and absence of the epic in Pashto literature. Moreover, this article tries to explore, study, indicate the value and rectify those misunderstanding created through our researches in terms of the epic in our written and spoken ancient and contemporary legendary works.

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Research Objectives

1. To introduce well organized norms of the epic in Pashto and Dari languages.
2. To rectify the misunderstanding and doubts existed about epic in Pashto and Dari literatures.
3. To know about the basics and structure of epic in these two languages.

Research Question:

What is Epic and what are the characteristics and norms of epic in Pashto and Dari Literature?

Research Methodology

This article is mainly based on library research.

Literature Review

In dictionaries of Pashto language, the word epic has been referred to bravery (Zahid, 2006). Similarly, Dari-Pashto and Pashto-Pashto dictionaries have given the meaning of bravery to the epic word (Naweess, 2012).

According to Shinwari, "Epic is that genre of literature which portraits human behavior through stories, speech and images (2013). Hiwadmal (2013) has interpreted the word epic into bravery and has said that it is one of the oldest types of literature. He has further added that the epic displays wars achievements and bravery of a person, nation, and tribe in from of legends and tales. According to this researcher, every poem which shows war bravery cannot be called epic; although, epic is none other than such poems. Tracing to above explanation, I can say that epic surrounds some specific characteristics and norms which have to be explored for the people understanding.

Characteristics of Pashto Epic

Epic of Pashto literature has to be discussed under two perspectives: (1) studying Pashto epic from the angle epic's general characteristics (2) Specific characteristics of Pashto's Epic. Epic's general characteristics refer to those general characteristics which the scholars have notified and can be applicable on any type of epic. If we study the epics of Pashto literature, we need to look for such general characteristics in order to compare whether the epics of Pashto are similar to those globally accepted epics or not? Some common characteristics of epic are as follow:

1. Every epic will present fighting bravery and success. These fighting may have some prestigious purposes, as Afrasyab fought with Rustim to defend the country, and some may not have some prestigious purposes, as some fights

from the Iliad epic which were only to defend their wives. Majority of the Pashto epics showcase the bravery of Pashtuns for some prestigious purposes. For example, the epic of Ridy Khan Momand (Mahmood Namah), the Epic of Spina, and the epic of Abdul Ghafar Hotak (Hotak Namah), all indicates wars which have been done for prestigious purposes because they have been launched against intruders who have hurt the honor and independence of the Afghans. Although, we have some epics which people consider as wars of intruders, for us they have some prestigious purposes.

2. In epics some animals have been treated with some crucial roles, thus we do not have not to mention them. For example, in the epic of Ahamd Shahi Shahnamah elephants have been mentioned for their good doings as following:

Elephants with diamond covers	walking passionately and emotional
All they broke the rows of solders	having very strong body
Powerful, passionate and high	does not fall Q
When they start going	the whole world Q

Animals mentioned in the oldest epics were very perfectionists. For instance, the horse of Asheel, Xanthos, had the quality to speak and predict, and had predicted the death of Asheel in the war of Tarwa. Similarly, the horse of Rustam, Rakhsh, was also not an ordinary horse. That had the quality to fight even with the lions. In the epics of Fatih Khan and Rabia, the horse of Fatih Khan, Koorang, was as much cute and could understand any cipher. Once Rabia said to the Koorang, "I will decorate the tip of the Fatih Koorang". The horse reaches the message to Fatih Khan, and the next day Fatih Khan returns back to the home from battle field, immediately, Rabia put her own Lawangeen(a plant having pleasant fragrance) in the Koorang's neck.

3. The champions of epics are always those people who have the talent to fight with terrifying animals and can kill very strong and brave animals like lions and dragon. The Dari language includes many examples of such champions. One of them is the Rustam and Asfandyar who have killed freaks and dragon. Alongside Dari, the Pashto romantic epics do have such examples. The famous one is Momin Khan and Shiranai who are fighting with monsters and finally kills that monster. In mythical epics, the champions fight with the

spiritual dragon and it is said that the stimuli of such epic can be such condition.

4. In the epics plants, trees and fruits are treated as having extraordinary and magical characteristics. As it has been mentioned in the epic of Fatih Khan Parisi that a melenagh (a Pashto word used for a person who has a religious value) put down 60 apples from the tree by hitting it once by stick. Then those apples were dam by the beggar and were given to 60 wives and husbands every wife bear a baby child. Similarly, in the epic of Adam Khan and Durkhanai it is mentioned that dates did have such quality.

In the epic of Gilgamesh, it has been mentioned that a plant has the quality to give prolong lives to people. Pomegranate has been treated a fruit of secrecy in some epics as its use made Asfandyar the brave person.

5. The champions of epics are always indicated as an extraordinary human being. For example, the fight between Rustim and Asfandyar occurred when Rustim was 500 years old. Although, in eastern epics champions are always indicated as having extraordinary origin; as an epic Thetis of Ashel Mortetis has been given the quality of God.
6. The champions of epics are said who eat extraordinary an unnatural food which is do not have the quality of ordinary food. For example, it is said that Rustim once ate Goora Donkey (a Pashto word used for a type of donkey).
7. The champions of epics face once with some anti-sentimental champion, as Rustam and Afrasyab who are the famous champions of the Pashto epics did have some anti-sentimental champions.
8. The champions of epics are always choose to travel on dangerous tracks. In the eastern and western epics, some champions are going on challenging and prolonged journeys. In the oral epics of Pashto literature, champions have always done the same. For example, the Indian journey of Fatih Khan and his friend or the journey of Momin Khan and Musa Jan.
9. The activities of the epic champions' circle underground and on the ground surface. Some champions can be existed anywhere as in the Losers of Paradise epic Adam is sometimes seen in paradise and sometimes in hell. As like in one mythical epic devil can be found anywhere as a great champion.

10. The champions of epics often giant doings which may have national and meaningful values. Majority of the Champions of Pashto epics both in oral and historical epics have such qualities. Every result of the epic in our literature is positive and fruitful from the perspectives of feats. Similarly, in the Persian epics the clash between Afrasyab Toorani and Rustam had been given the national value.
11. Another characteristic of the epic is that the champion is fighting against the enemies one by one. Such cases can be better illustrated in the fights of Musa Jan and Wali Jan, Musa Jan and Sahili, and in the Persian epics between Rustam and Ashakboos Kushani.
12. In epic, champions use different sort of weapons like spear, dagger, sword, fast and many others.
13. In epics, deceiving and tracking can be used as a tool of defeating others. For instance, in the epic of Musa Jan and Wali Jan, Sahili has dressed like Gul Maki's with shawl on the head. She had hidden sword and knife under the cloths which she used to kill Musa Jan.
14. In the epics truth, simplicity, dominancy and honor can be observed. In Pashto literature, the good examples of such situation can be found in the epics of Adam Khan, Fatih Khan, Wali Jan and Musa Jan.
15. All the epics have extraordinary style, and have strong and powerful wordings. They are severing in their meanings and the use of old wordings can be the core of attention.
16. The next characteristic of epic is that, they predict about the future. As the assassination of Ashel had been predicted in the war of Tarwa.

Above were the common characteristics of the epics which the epics of Pashto and Dari do possess, and majority of the writers have agreed upon them. Alongside these characteristics, the epics of Pashto do have some unique characteristics which have been remained as a legacy from common tradition of Pashto literature.

If to study the oral, semi oral and folkloric epics of the Pashto literature, we will find many different aspects of the Pashtuns' tribal life. The researcher of the Pashto Folklore and story. Attai has stated that in all these oral legends treatments are parallel with all the legal rights if incidents take place, tribal rightful lines are used as time lines.

Those translated epics which the Pashto writers have translated from Dari and other languages have been also put in the frame of Pashto epics. The epics of our language folkloric, written and prosodic or in poems use dignity; ritual constraints, shame, blame, and bidding with truth in suitable situations which can best illustrate our custom and tradition.

Result and Discussion

This article illustrated the norms and standards of the epics, if we put the epics of Pashto and Dari literature in this frame, it will give you a pure and exact epic. Those existed doubts with many readers will be rectified and will find a solid and comprehensible and effective epic.

The finding of this research indicates that every written either prose or poem cannot be counted as epic because epic has its own norms and frame and can have its own characteristics.

Conclusion

The common characteristics of the Pashto epic were illustrated with the help of common characteristics of the epic. This has been also proven that our epics are also not less than globally accepted epics which have both the standard characteristics and local characteristics. One main thing which the other epics do not have and only the epic of Pashto language possess was also clarified and explained with details.

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