

**THE PARADIGM OF HEROISM AS A SOCIO-CULTURAL CONSTRUCT**

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**Annotation.** *This thesis examines the paradigm of heroism as a socio-cultural and historical construct that reflects the moral ideals, value systems, and spiritual aspirations of society. It analyzes the transformation of the concept of heroism from primitive communal models to classical ethical interpretations, medieval religious ideals, modern national consciousness, and contemporary humanistic perspectives.*

**Key words:** *heroism, paradigm, socio-cultural phenomenon, moral values, collective identity, national consciousness, cultural memory, heroic archetype, value transformation*

**Introduction**

The paradigm of heroism is one of the important theoretical categories within the framework of social sciences and humanities, which manifests itself as a conceptual model that systematically expresses the ideas, moral norms, and historical needs of society about the ideal person. The concept of "paradigm" refers to a set of views, values, and norms that prevail within a certain period or culture. From this point of view, the paradigm of heroism also represents an integral system of criteria, qualities, and social functions of heroism, recognized by society at a certain historical stage.

**Main part**

In the process of historical development, the concept of heroism has constantly changed and been renewed. If in primitive society heroism was associated more with physical strength, courage, and the protection of the community from external threats, then in later stages it was enriched with the criteria of moral maturity, spiritual purity, and social responsibility. For example, through the image of Alpamysh, a product of epic thought, heroism is interpreted as a symbol of loyalty, devotion, and resilience to the people. In ancient philosophy, Aristotle connects heroism with moral virtue and conscious choice, interpreting it as a normative state between excess and cowardice. This approach allows us to interpret heroism not only as practical courage, but also as a product of spiritual consciousness and moral responsibility.

In the Middle Ages, the paradigm of heroism acquired a religious and spiritual content and was combined with faith and self-sacrifice. In the new era, with the formation of national statehood and political consciousness, heroism was closely connected with the ideas of national self-awareness, independence, and patriotism. As a result, the paradigm of heroism was reinterpreted and enriched in content in accordance with the ideological and social requirements of each historical period.

In the context of globalization and the transformation of values, the paradigm of heroism is replenished with new semantic layers. Today, the concept of heroism is not limited to military courage, but also includes such areas as scientific innovation, protection of human rights, social justice, and humanism. Therefore, the scientific and theoretical study of the genesis and evolution of the heroic paradigm plays an important methodological role in understanding the trends of spiritual development of modern society.

Scholars studying this field analyze heroism not only as a historical or literary phenomenon, but also as a complex socio-cultural phenomenon reflecting the spiritual, moral, and social structure of society. Through the image of the hero, society forms its ideal personality model, value system, and collective consciousness, and also meets the socio-intellectual and cultural needs of different historical periods.

Cultural scholar P. A. Sapronov, in his book "The Phenomenon of Heroism," analyzes heroism as one of the highest states of human existence, equating it with sacredness<sup>3</sup>. The author pays special attention to revealing the protagonist's life perspective, highlighting the national characteristics of heroism, and examining its historical changes from primitive times to the modern era. According to the scholar, heroism is not a simple feat or heroic action, but a complex phenomenon that expresses the highest human qualities and at the same time forms the cultural values, historical memory, and national identity of society.

Furthermore, scientists from the University of Richmond, S. T. Allison and G. R. Goethals, in their books "Heroes, What They Do & Why We Need Them"<sup>4</sup>, "True Heroes: An Influence Taxonomy of 100 Exceptional Individuals"<sup>5</sup>, "Heroism and Heroic Leadership" and "Handbook of Heroism and Heroic Leadership"<sup>6</sup> discussed the origin, types, and stages of heroism formation, presented the taxonomy of heroic personalities, and compared the phenomena of leadership and heroism. These studies allow us to understand heroism not only as an individual quality, but also as a complex phenomenon that is formed in the social, spiritual, and cultural context of society.

British scholar M. Storey, who studies the cultural identity of the British, writes: "A pragmatic way of looking at British identity and of examining the aspiration of ordinary people is to look at the kind of contemporary heroes they have created. These characters reveal a lot about the people who created them. They reflect how people

<sup>3</sup>Сапронов, П. А. Феномен героизма / П. А. Сапронов. - СПб.: Санкт-Петербургская академия МВД России, 1997. с 105

<sup>4</sup> Allison, S. T., Goethals, G. R. Heroes: What They Do and Why We Need Them / S. T. Allison, G. R. Goethals. - New York: Oxford University Press, 2011

<sup>5</sup> Allison, S. T., Goethals, G. R. True Heroes: An Influence Taxonomy of 100 Exceptional Individuals / S. T. Allison, G. R. Goethals. - New York: Routledge, 2013

<sup>6</sup> Allison, S. T., Goethals, G. R., Kramer, R. M. Handbook of Heroism and Heroic Leadership / S.T. Allison, G. R. Goethals, R. M. Kramer. - New York: Routledge, 2017

want to be or what they find surprising in others. As a group, heroes represent the values of their culture" <sup>7</sup>.

The hero, by displaying heroism or living as a hero, demonstrates unique qualities that are not common to many, such as selflessness, courage, fearlessness, etc. The hero attracts us precisely because, as a representative of a certain nation, he demonstrates a quality that is of particular importance to us, reached its highest peak. The hero does what others are not capable of. We unite around the hero to show our belonging to such high manifestations of human personality. In the image of a national hero, we immortalize a person who is dear to us, who wants to identify ourselves.

M.O.Caniwell emphasizes the same idea when studying the images of King Arthur and Don Quixote as national heroes who embodied features significant for the peoples of England and Spain and at the same time formed "the life, perception and imagination" of the peoples they serve: "Heroes are the leaders of men, these great ones; the modelers, patterns who are the living-light fountain, which it is good and pleasant to be near. We love heroes not only because they make us feel good about ourselves, but also because they foster a sense of identification, a feeling of belonging to a certain group." We love characters not only because we feel good, but also because they evoke a sense of identity, a sense of belonging to a certain group.<sup>8</sup> Agreeing with the scientist's opinion, it can be said that the image of the hero is an important symbolic tool in the process of self-awareness and self-imagination of society. For example, King Arthur is a symbol of justice and chivalry in English culture, while Don Quixote represents the idealism and spiritual determination of the Spanish people. From this point of view we can say that, heroes are not only role models, but also a source of identification: through them, a person feels that they belong to a certain group. Therefore, the phenomenon of heroism manifests itself as an important factor in the formation of national values and collective consciousness.

#### Conclusion

The paradigm of heroism represents a historically evolving system of values that reflects society's moral ideals, cultural priorities, and spiritual aspirations. From its early association with physical strength and communal protection to its later integration of moral virtue, religious devotion, national consciousness, and contemporary humanistic principles, heroism has continuously adapted to changing historical contexts.

<sup>7</sup> Storry, M., Childs, P. *British Cultural Identities* / M. Storry, P. Childs. - London: Routledge, 2007

<sup>8</sup> Canivell, M. *Literary Narratives and the Cultural Imagination: King Arthur and Don Quixote as National Heroes* / M. Canivell. - London: Lexington Books, 2018

Philosophical interpretations, beginning with Aristotle and developed by modern scholars such as P. A. Sapronov, Scott T. Allison, and George R. Goethals, demonstrate that heroism is not merely an individual act but a complex socio-cultural phenomenon. Through heroic figures, societies construct ideal personality models, reinforce collective identity, and articulate dominant value systems.

Thus, the study of the heroic paradigm provides important methodological insight into the spiritual and cultural development of society across historical periods.

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