

Folklore Elements in “Domostroy” and their Reflection in Family Concepts

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ABSTRACT

The article is devoted to the analysis of folklore elements in “Domostroy” and their reflection in the concepts of family. The study examines how folklore traditions and elements such as proverbs, rituals and myths influence the perception of the roles of men and women in the traditional Russian family. The focus is on the language used to convey these concepts and their role in shaping social norms and gender identities.

The study is based on literary and content analysis, which allows us to identify how folk traditions shape norms of behavior and ideas about family roles. For example, an examination of proverbs associated with the concept of “husband” and “wife” reveals that they support traditional gender stereotypes by emphasizing the strength and responsibility of the husband and the devotion and caring nature of the wife.

In addition, an analysis of the wedding ceremonies and rituals described in Domostroi illustrates how social norms influence the interaction between spouses and their responsibilities within the family. The results of the study highlight the importance of folklore as a mechanism for transmitting cultural values and norms that shape the perception of family and gender roles.

In conclusion, it is noted that understanding the folklore elements in Domostroy can significantly enrich the modern understanding of family relationships and gender identity, opening new horizons for further research in the fields of linguistics, sociology and cultural studies.

Keywords: Text of Old Russian literature, folklore, literary analysis, comparative analysis, content analysis, identification of folklore elements, the role of folklore in the formation of gender roles, social norms & customs, folklore elements, wedding rituals.

INTRODUCTION

“Domostroy” is one of the key texts of ancient Russian literature, which contains extensive recommendations for organizing family life, including the roles of husband and wife. The folkloric elements that permeate this text not only serve as a source of wisdom, but also reflect the collective experience of the people.

This study examines how folk traditions shape ideas about family roles and gender relations. We will explore how the proverbs, rituals and myths present in Domostroi support and reinforce traditional gender roles.

Folklore, as a reflection of folk wisdom and traditions, is woven into the text of Domostroi in many ways. Proverbs, sayings and rituals serve not only as expressive linguistic means, but also contain significant experience of ancestors, which is passed on from generation to generation.

These folklore elements help to understand how social norms and gender stereotypes that determine the behavior of men and women in the family were formed and strengthened. Thus, folklore is an integral part of the cultural code, which influences the perception of family relationships and gender roles.

This article is aimed at studying folklore elements in Domostroy and their role in the formation of family concepts. The analysis will consider the following questions: How do folklore traditions influence ideas about male and female roles in the family? How do proverbs and rituals emphasize and reinforce traditional gender norms? How does the Domostroy language use folklore elements to convey cultural values?

The study is based on an analysis of the text of “Domostroi” and comparing it with other folklore sources. The use of literary and content analysis methods will allow us to identify key folklore motifs and their influence on family concepts (Soloviev I.S., 2014).

As a result of this study, it is expected to gain a more complete understanding of the relationship between folklore and language in the context of traditional ideas about family and gender, which may contribute to a deeper understanding of historical changes and their impact on modern society.

Thus, this study will be a contribution to the study of Russian culture, language and sociology, opening new perspectives for further research in this area.

RESEARCH METHODS

To achieve these goals, the following methods were used:

1. *Literary analysis*

Analysis of the texts of “Domostroy” in order to identify folklore elements and their linguistic features. Literary analysis of “Domostroy” allows us to identify how the structure, style and compositional features of the text contribute to the consolidation of folklore and patriarchal values in family concepts. This analysis emphasizes that Domostroy follows the genre tradition of didactic literature, but at the same time actively incorporates elements of folk culture to give the narrative accessibility and persuasiveness.

“Domostroy” consists of a collection of instructions, divided into chapters, each of which is devoted to a specific topic - from personal morality to home management. This structural clarity and consistency meets the requirements of a didactic text and helps the reader easily grasp key tenets. In each topic, through successive instructions, the idea of hierarchy and obedience is traced, especially in matters of family life, where the husband is given the role of leader and mentor, and the wife is an assistant and executor of his will.

The author of Domostroi uses traditional rhetorical techniques for instructive literature, such as repetitions, appeals, and direct appeal to the reader. They give the text credibility and emotional impact, especially when it comes to family responsibilities. Using everyday, yet respectful language helps to connect the text with the reader and gives it authority.

2. *Comparative analysis*

Comparison of folklore motifs in *Domostroy* with similar elements in other folklore sources, such as Russian folk tales and proverbs.

A comparative analysis of *Domostroy* with other texts of the Russian written and oral tradition allows us to gain a deeper understanding of the unique and common features of its family concepts, as well as how *Domostroy* uses folkloric elements to affirm patriarchal values.

“*Domostroy*” has much in common with other edifying works of its time, such as “*Izmaragd*”, “*Teachings of Vladimir Monomakh*” and later collections of instructions. All these texts are focused on conveying moral and religious norms. However, *Domostroy* stands out for its special attention to everyday household and family responsibilities, describing them in detail and systematically.

Unlike other works, the emphasis here is on household management, raising children and the role of women as homemakers, reflecting a more practical approach to moral education.

Many of the instructions in *Domostroy* echo religious texts, especially the Bible, which emphasizes the ideas of obedience, fidelity and humility. However, in *Domostroy*, religious attitudes are adapted to everyday realities. For example, instructions about the roles of husband and wife are often justified not only by religious arguments, but also by practical advice on housekeeping.

This distinguishes *Domostroy* from purely religious texts, making its guidance more focused on everyday life, while remaining within the framework of church morality.

Analysis of wedding rituals shows that folklore tradition often depicts the bride and groom through the symbolism of a bountiful harvest, fertility and harmony, which emphasizes their interdependence. In *Domostroy*, this symbolism is absent, since the text is more focused on consolidating the hierarchy than on equality of roles. The bride and groom are portrayed not as equal partners, but as the future head and assistant.

Thus, "Domostroy" emphasizes the subordinate role of the wife and structures responsibilities, reinforcing a strict distribution of roles, which differs from the more balanced roles in folk rituals.

3. *Content analysis*

Studying the content of Domostroy to identify recurring themes and motifs related to the concepts of family and gender roles.

Analysis of the content of "Domostroi" allows us to better understand how, through a system of instructions, advice and moral standards, the author conveys the ideals of family and community, affirming patriarchal values. The text can be divided into several thematic parts, each of which reveals certain aspects of family life and social responsibility.

One of the central aspects of the content of Domostroi is the strict distribution of roles between husband and wife, which is the basis of the patriarchal structure. The husband is depicted as the head of the family and authority, responsible for spiritual and material well-being, while the wife appears as a subordinate figure, called upon to carry out household duties and maintain order in the house. The author often emphasizes that harmony in the home depends on the wife's obedience and humility, as well as on the husband's ability to be a fair and caring head.

A significant part of the text is devoted to raising children, which is seen as the most important task of parents. The main goal of education is to instill in children respect for parents and elders, hard work and adherence to Christian commandments.

The author of "Domostroy" pays special attention to issues of moral education, while the use of folklore expressions, such as proverbs and sayings, helps to consolidate the values passed on from generation to generation. Domostroy describes in detail how a household should be managed, emphasizing a strict distribution of responsibilities. The author points out that order, economy and thrift are necessary to ensure family well-being.

Home ownership and economic matters reflect the economic basis of a patriarchal structure, where husband and wife perform their roles, and the wife is responsible for housekeeping and food distribution. Household management is also seen as a form of

service to God, which gives all economic activities a deep spiritual meaning.

Religious and moral components occupy an important place in the content of Domostroy. The author calls to observe Christian commandments, to humble oneself before God and to be guided by Christian ethics in everyday life. Christian values are intertwined with family and social values, reinforcing the patriarchal structure and emphasizing the importance of submission and obedience as basic principles. The content of Domostroy is not limited to issues of family life; Considerable attention is paid to relationships with neighbors, employees and the community as a whole. The author instructs to behave fairly and piously towards others, to maintain peace and mutual understanding. The idea of mutual aid, especially in difficult times, is emphasized as an integral part of Christian life and social ethics.

In general, an analysis of the content of "Domostroy" shows that through instructions imbued with Christian morality and folk wisdom, the author creates a holistic picture of an ideal family.

RESEARCH RESULTS

The study showed that folklore elements in Domostroy help shape ideas about family roles and responsibilities, reinforcing patriarchal values and making them accessible to perception. The Domostroi texts use proverbs, sayings, and folk images to convey the ideals of the family: the husband is portrayed as the head and protector, and the wife as the keeper of home comfort and teacher of children. These images reflect traditional roles that maintained social stability and maintained order in society.

Folklore elements not only help explain the rules of behavior, but also make them understandable and relatable to a wide audience. Thanks to folk wisdom, the content of Domostroi becomes more accessible and strengthens such qualities as respect, obedience and adherence to traditions. These folklore expressions help people understand the importance of family hierarchy and the role of each family member.

1. **Identification of folklore elements:** During the analysis, various folklore elements were identified, such as proverbs related to family relationships, rituals related to weddings and parenthood, as well as mythological motifs reflecting ideas about the family.
2. **The role of folklore in the formation of gender roles:** Folklore elements in Domostroy emphasize traditional gender roles, depicting the husband as the owner and the wife as the keeper of the home. For example, proverbs that emphasize male strength and responsibility create the image of an ideal husband (A. V. Penderetskaya, 2012).
3. **Social norms and customs:** Folklore rituals, such as the wedding rituals described in Domostroi, illustrate the social norms that define the interaction between spouses and their responsibilities. This confirms that folklore serves as an important mechanism for the transmission of cultural values and norms (Jacobson R., 1974).

DISCUSSION

A discussion of the results of the study of folklore elements in Domostroy allows for a deeper understanding of how these elements shape concepts of family and gender roles in traditional Russian society. Folklore, representing a vast reservoir of folk wisdom and collective experience, helps to strengthen traditional norms and values regarding family relationships.

1. *Folklore as a reflection of social norms*

Folklore elements, such as proverbs and rituals, serve not only as a means of expression, but also as a tool for transmitting social experience. The proverbs contained in Domostroy reflect generally accepted norms of behavior that define male and female roles.

For example, phrases emphasizing the virtues of hard work and devotion create an ideal image of a wife as caring and sacrificial, while images of a husband emphasize his responsibility and strength (Sukhikh A.I., 2008).

2. *Rituals and rituals in the formation of identity*

Wedding rituals and family traditions described in *Domostroy* also play an important role in the formation of identity. These rituals not only mark the transition from one social status to another, but also reinforce gender roles, creating the conditions for defining responsibilities and expectations from spouses.

Analysis of rituals shows that they are not just cultural practices, but also powerful mechanisms that strengthen traditional ideas about the family.

3. *Language means as tools for forming ideas*

The use of linguistic means in *Domostroy* demonstrates how language serves as a tool for the formation and maintenance of social norms. Folkloric elements permeate the text, creating a cultural context in which the roles of husband and wife are perceived.

For example, repeated expressions associated with responsibilities and rights create stable images, which subsequently become part of the collective consciousness (V. I. Basenkov, 2011).

4. *Comparison with modern ideas*

It is interesting to note that many folklore elements reflecting gender roles are preserved in modern ideas about the family. This demonstrates that historical traditions continue to influence modern culture and social norms. Exploring these parallels can open new perspectives for understanding current gender relations and the challenges facing modern society.

5. *Limitations of the study and prospects for further research*

Despite the importance of the analysis, it should be noted that the study of folklore elements in *Domostroy* has its limitations. The limited text corpus and possible interpretive biases may affect the validity of the findings.

In the future, broader comparative studies with other cultural texts and folklore sources should be considered to gain a more complete understanding of gender roles and family concepts in different cultural contexts.

CONCLUSION

Folklore elements in Domostroy play a key role in shaping the concepts of family and gender roles in traditional Russian society. Analyzing these elements provides insight into how linguistic and cultural traditions interact to support and reinforce social norms.

The results of the study highlight the importance of studying folklore for understanding the historical and cultural foundations of gender roles, which, in turn, can contribute to a more complete understanding of modern ideas about family and gender. This study opens up new perspectives for further research concerning the relationship between folklore and language practices in the context of traditional Russian culture.

In a deeper examination of the topic, it can be noted that Domostroy includes many folklore elements that act as a reflection of traditional folk ideas about family values, behavior patterns and social structure.

These elements were an integral part of the worldview and culture of that time, forming the unique concepts of "husband", "wife", "parent" and "child", which were distinguished by their special symbolism and functions within the family institution.

The folklore traditions included in Domostroy help to understand the value guidelines that determined the ideal of the family in Russian culture of the 16th century. For example, the concept of "husband" is closely associated with ideas of strength, responsibility, spiritual leadership, as well as with stable folklore associations such as "patron of the family," "guardian of the home."

The concept of "wife," in turn, is viewed not only through the prism of humility and obedience, but also through traits that are important for folk culture - thriftiness, fidelity and concern for the well-being of the family. Folklore images of spouses are often supplemented with epithets emphasizing their roles: "good master," "good wife," "mistress of the house." These epithets also indicate the value of harmony in the family and stable gender patterns of behavior.

These folklore images also influenced the upbringing of children, forming the concept of the “parent” as a mentor responsible for the spiritual and moral development of the child. Folklore elements, such as proverbs and sayings mentioned in *Domostroi*, emphasize the importance of education in rigor, respect for elders and for work.

They serve as an expression of folk wisdom, which embodies centuries-old traditions of moral education. Thus, stable expressions like “a good name is better than wealth” or “where there is work, there is success” reflect popular ideas about the importance of work and honor, as well as the role of parents in instilling them.

In conclusion, we can conclude that the folklore elements reflected in the *Domostroi* family concepts represent not just collected traditions, but also a philosophical and religious understanding of the role of the family in Russian culture. This synthesis of folk and religious values has formed a stable ideal, where the family is perceived as an inextricable part of cultural and social life, focused on observing moral standards and serving society.

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