



Evolution of Female Images in Russian Literature Until 18th Century

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Abstract: *The article describes the living conditions of an ancient Russian woman, presents biographies of the most famous of them. An assessment of the role of women in the formation and development of Russian statehood and culture is given.*

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Modern literary criticism believes that the image of a woman was first mentioned in the Renaissance in the works of Italian writers Isotta Nogarolla, Laura Chereta and Christina Pisanskaya. In her works, Christina Pisanskaya talks about the inequality of men to women, where the second one speaks in the "argument about women." Christina Pisanskaya reveals the world of danger, intrigue that awaits in the meticulous male world where the woman survives. So, one after another, the works of this normative construction by J. Boccaccio "about 104 famous women", Cornelius Agrippa "Declaration on the nobility and superiority of the female over the male", Poulain de la Bara "On the equality of both sexes" come out one after another.

In other words, the main marker of the image of a woman in these works stands for the right of equality with men who fought for the granting of voting rights "the tyranny of men deprives a woman of the freedom she received at birth." In the above works, the development of the original feminism is clearly expressed.

Thus, in Western European literature, the image of a woman until the second half of the 20th century stands for the right to gain a voice in the economic and legal spheres, and an intensive study of the role of a woman begins. In the book *The Political Economy of Women's Liberation* by Margaret Bexton, the image of a woman is shown in a domestic, unpaid household. This is a wife, mother, worker who faces various problems and does not have property rights.

It can be noted that the literature of the West eventually leads us back to the origins of feminism, where a woman is constantly fighting, suppressed by men. Thus, the works of Western European literature vary in two directions: the female slave and the female wrestler.

In Russian literary criticism, the concept of the image of a woman appeared later in the XII - XIII centuries. In the works of Ancient Rus', one can find works where attention is paid to female characters: "The Tale of Peter and Fevronia of Murom", "The Life of Yuliania Lazarevskaya", "The Tale of Karp Sutulov", "The Tale of Bygone Years", "The Tale of Igor's Campaign", "Tale and Savva Grudtsyna. Old Russian writers rarely turned their attention to the daughters, wives and mothers of their heroes," says D.S. Likhachev. "However, in all the few mentions, a woman invariably appears in the charm of gentle caring, a penetrating understanding of state concerns and

the anxieties of her husbands and brothers. ... Love for a husband, father or son does not dull their love for the Motherland, hatred for enemies, confidence in the rightness of the cause of a loved one". It should be noted that in Russian literary criticism there are a number of studies that affect the terminological characteristics of this concept, as S.M. Soloviev notes that "... in the Middle Ages, women of the upper strata of society took an active part in the political life of principalities and lands." The researcher claims that many of them had utensils, and often had the right to choose suitors on their own. Women do not often appear in chronicles. An example is *The Tale of Bygone Years*, where the image of the fair sex is mentioned several times. Women were regarded in relation to men. The image of Princess Olga appears before us from the first pages of *The Tale of Bygone Years*. Princess Olga appears in the work as a figure, a defender of the Russian land. Thanks to the reforms of Princess Olga, the political life of Kievan Rus is strengthened in international relations. During her reign, no internecine and feudal strife was noted on the territory of Rus'. In the work *"The Tale of Peter and Fevronia of Murom"* the main character is not the prince, but Fevronia, who solves difficulties without panic. The image of Fevronia contains the beautiful features of an ancient Russian woman. The role of a woman has a great impact on the formation and development of Russian statehood. Fevronia carries love, devotion to a loved one. The author adds to the image truthfulness and a sincere attitude to the prince, ready to ease the torment of a loved one. The author notes the individuality of the image of Fevronia in relation to other girls.

From this it follows that "in ancient Russian culture and literature, a woman personifies the highest human values." In ancient Russian literature, the image of the fair sex incorporates positive motives, bright national features, the uniqueness and originality of these characters.

The reform of Peter the Great had a great influence on the formation of literature of the 18th century. This period of literature combines elements of ancient Russian literature and innovation. The 18th century saw tremendous changes not only in public social life, but also in the cultural world. In literature, there are new plots, artistic elements that were oriented, imitated the Western tradition. In the literature of the 18th century, the system of female images has a certain structure. As mentioned earlier, this period of Russian literature has not been studied in sufficient volume. If the image of a Russian woman in ancient Russian literature has a collective image, where they were revealed either positively or negatively, since the literature of this period was marked by the absence of authorial fiction. Yu.M. Lotman, characterizing the term we are studying, concludes that it was the Petrine era that "involved women in the world of literature" It follows from this that Empress Elizabeth was not only the discoverer of universities in Moscow, but was also a Russian poetess who freely expressed her thoughts and feelings in poetry.

G.A. Gukovsky, V.V. Sipovsky, P.N. Berkov, L.V. Pumpyansky tried to characterize the term of fiction we are studying. In particular, the scientist A.G. Maslova, speaking about the odes of G.R. Derzhavin, notes several female images, namely: "another aspect of the state ideology: Russia, she is Catherine, is the mother of all peoples, she collects them under her a wing where they aspire with desire and hope." From this it follows that the image of the Russian Empress combines courage and beauty. Elizabeth appears as "the beauty of the rulers of the sovereign!" In which "truths of kindness, Heroism, beauty, generosity are seen." V.K. Trediakovsky resorts to similar images in his work *"Strophes laudable to the villager's life"*. The writer embodies the image of a modern wife:

Буде ж весь толь постоянна
Дом жена благословенный с ним,
Сарра коль была или Сусанна,-
То спокойства нет сравненна с сим

In the typology of female images, social status is of great importance, that is, the works of this period were dedicated to Russian empresses.

I.V. Lomonosov depicts the image of a strong woman "Ode on the day of accession to the All-Russian throne of Her Majesty the Empress Elizabeth Petrovna in 1747." It is impossible not to mention the ode of G.R. Derzhavin "Felitsa", since women were proclaimed to the Russian throne. In the diary notes of G.R. Derzhavin, the image of Felitsa is shown not as a young woman, a tired empress who does not want to deal with problems in her empire. The typology of female images of the 18th century can serve as a topic for another scientific study. A review of the works of this period shows the following types of female images: the image of a great ruler and an ingenuous woman from the people.

In other words, considering the conditions for the emergence and evolution of female images in literature, each period has its own new characteristic traditions that meet the needs of the new century.

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