

Relation to State Leaders in Paremias (Based on Uzbek Folk Paremias)

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Abstract: This article analyzes the role of a leader in the state and their responsibility before the people on the basis of Uzbek folk paremias, with particular emphasis on their linguocultural features. The study examines Uzbek folk proverbs such as “El bolasi bo’lmagan, el og’asi bo’lolmas” (“One who cannot become a child of the people cannot become their leader”), “G’oz to’dasi yo’lboshchisiz uchmas” (“A flock of geese cannot fly without a guide”), “El egasiz bo’lmas, to’n – yoqasiz” (“A people cannot exist without a leader, just as a coat cannot exist without a collar”) and “Yaxshi rahbar elni o’ylar, yomon rahbar hovli bo’ylar” (“A good leader thinks about the people, while a bad leader thinks about his own yard”) revealing the people’s perceptions of leadership. The analysis demonstrates that, within the connotative framework of the Uzbek nation, the image of a leader is associated with such qualities as patriotism, justice, responsibility, guidance, and devotion. Furthermore, the article explores the conceptual model of the relationship between the leader and the people reflected in paremias, as well as the role of leadership in ensuring social stability and national development. The findings of the research serve as an important source for identifying the national worldview, social values, and linguocultural perspectives of the Uzbek people.

Keywords: Paremia, leadership, concept, homeland concept, linguoculturology, conceptual analysis, Uzbek folk proverbs.

Introduction: Proverbs are considered important paremiological units that embody the centuries-old life experience, worldview, spiritual values, and social relations of a people. They express the people’s views on homeland, leadership, justice, unity, and public welfare in a concise and figurative manner. In particular, the concepts of leadership and homeland occupy a special place in Uzbek folk proverbs, where people’s perceptions of an ideal leader and their views on social governance are reflected.

In modern linguistics, increasing attention is being paid to the linguocultural, cognitive, and semantic study of paremias. From this perspective, proverbs serve as an important source for studying national thinking, cultural values, and social stereotypes. In particular, the reflection of the leadership concept in public consciousness and the ways in which it is associated with the homeland and the people constitute one of the relevant issues of scientific research.

This article provides a linguocultural and semantic analysis of the role of a leader before the people and the homeland as reflected in Uzbek folk proverbs. Proverbs such as “El bolasi bo’lmagan, el og’asi bo’lolmas” (“One who cannot become a child of the people cannot become their leader”), “G’oz to’dasi yo’lboshchisiz uchmas” (“A flock of geese cannot fly without a guide”), “El egasiz bo’lmas, to’n – yoqasiz” (“A people cannot exist without a leader, just as a coat cannot exist without a collar”) and “Yaxshi rahbar elni o’ylar, yomon rahbar hovli bo’ylar” (“A good leader thinks about the people, while a bad leader thinks about his own yard”) were selected as the object of the study. Through these paremias, the people’s perceptions of leadership are revealed.

The purpose of the study is to identify the semantic and conceptual features of the concepts of leadership and homeland in Uzbek folk proverbs and to reveal the national and cultural values expressed in them. The

findings of the research contribute to enriching scientific studies in the fields of paremiology, linguoculturology, and semasiology.

METHODOLOGY

During the research process, several methods were employed. The descriptive method was used to explain the linguistic features of the proverbs; the componential analysis method helped identify the main semantic units within the paremias; and the conceptual analysis method was applied to determine the cognitive models of the concepts of “leader” and “homeland.” In addition, the comparative analysis method was used to interpret the figurative expressions and metaphorical structures found in the proverbs. These methodological approaches ensured the scientific accuracy of the study and contributed to a deeper understanding of the linguocultural essence of the leadership concept in Uzbek folk proverbs.

RESULTS

The findings of the study demonstrate that Uzbek folk proverbs reflect the inseparable connection between the leader and the people. Below, a number of paremias with similar meanings are analyzed.

“Yaxshi rahbar elni o‘ylar, Yomon rahbar hovli bo‘ylar” (“A good leader thinks about the people, while a bad leader thinks about his own yard”). This proverb is a folk expression of wisdom that reflects the moral image of a leader and his responsibility before the people. In the proverb, the main characteristic of an ideal leader is prioritizing the interests of the people, whereas the negative image is associated with selfishness and personal benefit. This contrast is expressed through an axiological opposition.

As can be observed, the proverb compares two different types of leaders:

- a good leader — a devoted and responsible person who cares about the interests of the people;
- a bad leader — an individual concerned only with personal gain and self-interest.

This meaning is metaphorically conveyed through the symbolic phrase “hovli bo‘ylar” (“thinks about his own yard”).

The proverb reflects the Uzbek people’s perception of an ideal leader. In the national worldview, a leader must first and foremost serve the people; a true leader places public interests above personal desires, whereas a bad leader thinks only of himself. Qualities such as patriotism, devotion, and justice are evaluated as positive values in the proverb, while greed and self-interest are strongly condemned.

This paremia also has synonymous variants commonly

used among the people, such as “Yaxshi rahbar yo‘l qurar, Yomon rahbar yo‘l buzar” (“A good leader builds roads, while a bad leader destroys them”) and “Yaxshi rahbar yurtga rohat keltirar, Nodon rahbar yurtga “mehmon” keltirar” (“A good leader brings prosperity to the country, while an ignorant leader brings ‘guests’ to the country”). These synonymouses also reflect the linguocultural views of the Uzbek people regarding the ideal leader.

The paremia “El egasiz bo‘lmas, to‘n – yoqasiz” (“A people cannot exist without a leader, just as a coat cannot exist without a collar”) is another expression of folk wisdom emphasizing the importance of leadership and governance in society. In this paremia, the component *el* refers to the people or society; *ega* denotes a ruler, protector, or leader; while *to‘n* *yoqasi* symbolizes an essential and inseparable part of clothing.

The component *to‘n* (traditional coat) in the proverb requires special interpretation as a cultural element with national significance. A *to‘n* is a long outer garment open at the front, and the mention of this term in Mahmud Kashgari’s “*Devonu Lug‘otit Turk*” demonstrates its ancient origins. The word *to‘n* is a widely used name for clothing in Turkic languages. L. Budagov notes that in the Tatar language *ton*, and in Turkish *don*, refer to a coat, boots, or footwear, while in Kyrgyz it denotes women’s summer outerwear. The fact that the word has referred to different types of clothing suggests that it may originally have been named according to the material from which it was made.

A closer examination of the forms and meanings of this word in other Turkic languages further clarifies this idea. For example, in Khakas, *ton* means “fur coat”; in Tuvan, *ton* means “fur coat” or “robe”; in Nogai, *ton* refers to “skin” or “sheepskin coat,” from which words such as *tonlav* (“to skin a dead or hunted animal”) and *tonlik* (“skin intended for clothing”) are derived. In Tatar, *to‘n* means “coat” or “fur coat,” while *tunalu* means “to skin an animal”. V. V. Radlov associates this word semantically with the word *tin* (“squirrel”), used in Tuvan as *diin* and in Bashkir as *tejen/tin*. Thus, based on the meaning “skin” in the ancient Turkic word *tin*, related words emerged in Uzbek (*tiyin*), Tajik (*tin*), Russian (*dengi*), Korean (*ton*), and Udmurt (*tuj*). This meaning of *tin* is also preserved in Kazakh, Uyghur, and Turkmen languages.

The provided lexicographic explanations and analyses further clarify that the word *to‘n* originally meant “skin” or “hide”. The proverb reflects the linguocultural views of the people regarding social order and governance. By employing the metaphor of the coat’s

collar, the proverb alludes to leaders as essential pillars of society. Here, the metaphorical model constructed on the analogy of “ega-el” (leader–people) and “yoqa-to’n” (collar–coat) emphasizes that a leader is a necessary element within the social system.

“G’oz to’dasi yo’lboshchisiz uchmas” (“A flock of geese cannot fly without a guide”). This paremia expresses folk wisdom about the interdependence of a community and its leadership. In the proverb, the phrase “g’oz to’dasi” (“flock of geese”) symbolizes a community, people, or group, while “yo’lboshchi” “guide” refers to a leader, manager, or head. The observation that geese fly in a specific formation is based on natural phenomena noticed by the people, where typically one goose leads and directs the others. From this natural behavior, the people drew generalized conclusions about the necessity of leadership, the importance of governance, and the value of unity. The proverb metaphorically conveys that any group or society requires a leader to maintain order, cohesion, and direction.

By representing the guiding and organizational function of a leader metaphorically, the proverb highlights the indispensable link between the community (flock) and the leader (guide), and reflects the folk understanding that a society without leadership tends toward disorder.

“El bolasi bo’lolmagan El og’asi bo’lolmas” (“One who cannot become a child of the people cannot become their leader”). This proverb expresses the Uzbek people’s deep insights regarding leadership, community, and human virtues. It has a synonymous variant: “One beloved by the people becomes a respected elder of the nation.” The term “el bolasi” (“child of the people”) denotes a humble person who empathizes with the people, understands their struggles, and maintains close and positive relations with them. A person possessing such qualities can become “el og’asi” — the head of the people, a leader, or ruler; someone who lacks these qualities, does not live among the people, and is insensitive to their concerns, cannot be a good leader. From this proverb, it is evident that in Uzbek folk thinking, a leader is envisioned as a community-oriented person emerging from among the people.

Several key concepts can be identified in the proverb:

- EL — the people, society, homeland
- BOLA — a loyal child
- OG’A — leader, protector
- LEADERSHIP — service and responsibility

The proverb presents leadership not as dominion or authority, but as a concept rooted in service to the

people. A fundamental requirement of leadership is to come from the people, understand their concerns, and empathize with them. This reflects a “leader–people” relationship built on social closeness and trust.

Overall, the analysis demonstrates that in Uzbek folk proverbs, the concept of leadership is expressed through three main attributes:

1. Emergence from among the people
2. Guiding and managerial capacity
3. Patriotism and justice

These qualities are interpreted as the moral and ethical characteristics of a leader, crucial for national and societal stability. Many similar paremiological expressions exist, indicating that the Uzbek people’s understanding of leadership is deeply developed and culturally entrenched.

DISCUSSION

The findings of the study demonstrate that the linguocognitive and axiological interpretations of the concepts of leadership and homeland in Uzbek folk proverbs have deep cultural roots. These findings are consistent with previously established theoretical perspectives within paremiology and linguoculturology, confirming that in folk consciousness the image of a leader has always been formed in close connection with the interests of society and the homeland.

One of the main features observed in the proverbs is that leadership is interpreted not as a personal privilege, but as a social responsibility. In particular, the proverb “El bolasi bo’lolmagan, el og’asi bo’lolmas” (“One who cannot become a child of the people cannot become their leader”) emphasizes that the primary criterion for leadership is to emerge from among the people and to care about public interests. This indicates that the categories of “closeness” and “trust” occupy a central place in the sociocognitive model of leadership.

Likewise, in the proverb “G’oz to’dasi yo’lboshchisiz uchmas” (“A flock of geese cannot fly without a guide”) the functional aspect of leadership — guidance and direction — is expressed through a metaphorical image. This corresponds with nationwide ideas concerning the necessity of a coordinating leader for the stable development of society. However, in the worldview of the Uzbek people, this necessity is shown to possess not only an organizational but also a moral foundation.

The proverb “El egasiz bo’lmas, to’n – yoqasiz” (“A people cannot exist without a leader, just as a coat cannot exist without a collar”) expresses the inseparable relationship between the leader and society through a structural metaphor. Within this

model, the leader is interpreted as an integral part of society, and the integrity of the social system is considered dependent upon their existence. This demonstrates that Uzbek linguoculture places high value on social order and governance.

The proverb “Yaxshi rahbar elni o‘ylar, yomon rahbar hovli bo‘ylar” (“A good leader thinks about the people, while a bad leader thinks about his own yard”) reflects the strongest axiological opposition within the concept of leadership. Here, the contrast between “thinking about the interests of the people” and “pursuing personal benefit” appears as the principal evaluative criterion. The results indicate that, in Uzbek folk consciousness, the ideal model of leadership is characterized by devotion, justice, and patriotism.

The discussion confirms that in Uzbek folk proverbs the concept of leadership is evaluated not only as a subject of social governance, but also as a moral and ethical ideal. This demonstrates that, within the national mentality, the relationships among homeland, people, and leader have historically developed and continue to exist as a value-based and systematic structure.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the image of a leader in Uzbek paremias is interpreted as a person closely connected with the people, prioritizing the interests of society, and bearing responsibility for the development of the homeland. In the proverbs, national stability, public welfare, and social progress are directly associated with the moral and social qualities of the leader. This confirms that, within Uzbek linguoculture, leadership is regarded not merely as a governing function, but also as a position carrying profound moral responsibility.

Overall, Uzbek folk proverbs constitute an important linguocultural source reflecting the formation, development, and consolidation of the concepts of leadership and homeland as values within the national mentality. The findings of this study may serve as a theoretical foundation for further research in the fields of paremiology, linguoculturology, and cognitive linguistics.

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