

Artistic Interpretation Of Folk Oral Literature In Omon Matjon's Works

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Abstract: This article offers a comprehensive analysis of the role of folklore—especially proverbs and sayings—in the poetry of the renowned Uzbek poet Omon Matjon, examining their impact on poetic structure and imagery. The poet seamlessly weaves folk proverbs into his verses, transforming them into vehicles of aesthetic and philosophical meaning. At times, Omon Matjon revises established proverbs, infusing them with contemporary content and spirit; in other cases, he forges new sayings from a poet's perspective. This reveals his distinctive creative style and his artistically reflective engagement with oral folk tradition.

Keywords: Omon Matjon, Uzbek literature, contemporary interpretation, poetic language, proverb, saying, phrase, figurative expression.

Introduction: Uzbek people's rich cultural heritage has taken shape over centuries in oral forms—proverbs, sayings, legends, and myths—and has been passed down from generation to generation. The distinctive philosophical and spiritual content of these oral creations, their reflection of life experience and folk wisdom, are of incomparable importance for the development of Uzbek literature.

A prominent representative of the Khorezm literary milieu, People's Poet of Uzbekistan Omon Matjon stands out as a masterful artistic interpreter of oral folk tradition. Over nearly sixty years of creative activity, he has drawn on folk proverbs and sayings in his poems, epics, and prose, adapting them to contemporary poetic language. In this way, his works have become a unique expression of national spirit and the people's worldview.

This article analyzes the artistic interpretation of proverbs and sayings in Omon Matjon's work, how they enrich poetic language and imagery, and how the poet reinterprets folk wisdom through a modern poetic lens. In all of his works one can observe references to oral folk heritage—proverbs, sayings, legends, and myths.

In Uzbek literature, folkloric materials—proverbs and sayings—are often employed for artistic purposes. They serve not only as embellishments to poems, but

also as vehicles for philosophical meaning, ethical conclusions, national consciousness, and the people's worldview. Poets treat folklore as a distinctive artistic device and strive to reinterpret it in the creative process using modern methods.

As the People's Writer of Uzbekistan Muhammad Ali has noted, "Omon Matjon's poetry is poetry that springs from folk legends and fairy tales" [1]. O. Sobirov likewise states that "Drawing inspiration from folklore, proverbs and sayings positively influences the development of Uzbek literature" [2]. This theoretical premise shows that Omon Matjon's work is grounded in oral folk tradition [2]. A close look at Omon Matjon's oeuvre reveals striking examples of this tradition.

O'n besh kishi edik kattayu kichik

Kirsak sig'armizmi hammamiz birdan?!

Ko'ngilni keng qiling demish roviylar

Barchaga joy yetdi shu bir kaft yerdan.

The creator's mastery lies in seeking out and finding different forms of expressions with the same meaning and using them effectively where appropriate. In some cases, he also turns to phraseological variants of these proverb forms.

Kimdir : "Yer ostida, hamma teng..."

Bu hazil topmadi ma'no.

Odamlar jips-yaqin turishgan joyda

Sirayam tangu tor ko'rinmas dunyo.

In the creative process, the poet weaves folk proverbs into his lines and draws deeply reasoned conclusions; as a result, the poem's meaningfulness intensifies and its philosophical dimension comes to the fore.

Below, in Omon Matjon's poetic section "Sen-men...", we can observe his extensive use of sayings.

Sen kunduz rang bilmay alamli kezsang,

Men tunda ham yorug' osmon bo'laman.

In the poetic passage cited above, the figurative expression "yorug' osmon" ("bright sky"), when applied to a person, conveys the ability to see everything illuminated—as in broad daylight.

Shaped by the influence of folklore, the poet Omon Matjon created in continuity with the traditions of his great predecessors and won wide renown among the people.

Sen itsan, o'tgan ketganga xurgan

Men-chi, katta yo'lga karvon bo'laman.

At times the poet renews existing proverbs in line with his artistic aims, interpreting them in a contemporary spirit or approaching them through alternative imagery. In such cases, the folkloric specimen is elevated to the level of a "poet's proverb." This demonstrates not only the creator's deep knowledge of oral folk tradition but also his ability to reinterpret it. For example:

In the line "Sen itsan...", the image of the "caravan" reinforces the positive spirit of the traditional proverb, yet here Omon Matjon turns it into a symbol of human steadfastness—an unwavering commitment to the path of goodness. As a genre, the proverb plays an active role by expressing people's lives, everyday practices, worldview, aspirations, and centuries-long experience, and thus fulfills a significant ideological and educational function. A proverb gives a person ideological direction and opens the way for the formation and development of positive ideals. [3]

For this reason, representatives of Uzbek literature have often turned to folk creativity—especially proverbs and sayings—and made fruitful use of it. Proverbs and sayings also occupy a very large and important place in Omon Matjon's work. In his poems, the poet employs them with great skill, using them masterfully and in their proper place.

Anu... boshliq. Necha yillar tinch,

Bir idora, kirar-chiqar g'oz.

Zo'r shiori: "Sen menga tegma..."

Ishi – eski hammom, eski tos.

In some poems, proverbs serve as devices that intensify the critical tone. For example, through expressions like "Sen menga tegma" ("Don't interfere with me") or "eski hammom, eski tos" ("the same old bathhouse, the same old basin"—i.e., the same old story), the poet sharply criticizes social inertia, irresponsibility, and bureaucratic indifference. In this way, the folkloric text becomes a vehicle for artistic-critical thought.

Xo'sh go'yo istiqbol ko'zgusi bo'lgan

Bu joylar ne uchun qush uchmas sahro?

In the poem "Words in Praise of the Steppe," the expression "a desert where not even birds fly" conveys the extent to which the steppe possesses truly desert-like qualities. The creator's effective and skillful use of expressive means testifies to the high level of his artistic mastery. In this work, the poet also recounts the origin story of the Uzbek national dish "Sumalak."

Omon Matjon's way of using proverbs differs from that of other Uzbek poets such as Abdulla Oripov or Muhammad Yusuf. In Oripov, proverbs tend to fulfill a more philosophical-intellectual function, whereas in Omon Matjon they often serve as an emotional, impactful device that intensifies imagery. This shows that each poet has a distinctive approach to folklore.

Men she'r yozsam,

Endi uni qog'ozga emas,

Anov yal-yal yonayotgan o'tga yozaman.

O'tning alvon shiorlari, olov lahjasi,

Qalbimdagi yonishlardan so'ylar bezabon!

The poet emphasizes that he expresses the fiery emotions boiling in his heart through deeply meaningful ideas—as if speaking in the very idiom of flame. The artistic and figurative devices used in the lines serve to convey the creator's inner state, way of life, mood, and worldview. In short, in Omon Matjon's work, proverbs and sayings function not merely as ornament or a token of folkishness, but as a principal vehicle bearing artistic-philosophical ideas. The poet's apt and creative use of these devices shows that he is an artist who keenly feels the spirit of the people. He views the folk proverb through the eyes of a modern poet and casts it into a new artistic form. This quality makes Omon Matjon one of the leading figures in the folkloric explorations of Uzbek poetry at the end of the twentieth and in the twenty-first century.

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