

THE SYSTEM OF TRADITIONAL EPITHETS IN RUSSIAN AND UZBEK FOLKLORE TRADITIONS

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Annotation: This article is devoted to a comparative analysis of fixed epithets in Russian and Uzbek folklore traditions. It examines their functions, structural features, and semantic load. Special attention is given to the role of epithets in shaping the national worldview and preserving cultural memory.

Keywords: folklore, fixed epithets, Russian tradition, Uzbek tradition, imagery, language, cultural memory.

Аннотация: статья посвящена сопоставительному анализу устойчивых эпитетов в русской и узбекской фольклорных традициях. Рассматриваются их функции, структурные особенности и семантическая нагрузка. Особое внимание уделяется роли эпитетов в формировании национальной картины мира и сохранении культурной памяти.

Ключевые слова: фольклор, устойчивые эпитеты, русская традиция, узбекская традиция, образность, язык, культурная память.

Annotatsiya: mazkur maqola rus va o'zbek folklor an'alaridagi barqaror epitetlarning qiyosiy tahliliga bag'ishlangan. Unda epitetlarning funksiyalari, strukturaviy xususiyatlari hamda semantik yuklamasi ko'rib chiqiladi. Shuningdek, epitetlarning milliy dunyoqarashni shakllantirish va madaniy xotirani saqlashdagi o'rniga alohida e'tibor qaratilgan.

Kalit so‘zlar: folklor, barqaror epitelar, rus an’anasi, o‘zbek an’anasi, obrazlilik, til, madaniy xotira.

Introduction: Folklore, as a form of collective artistic consciousness, preserves stable linguistic structures that are transmitted from generation to generation. One of such expressive means is the use of fixed epithets—traditional word combinations conventionally associated with particular images, characters, or phenomena.

The Concept of the Fixed Epithet

A fixed epithet is a conventionalized descriptive expression repeatedly attached to a specific object, character, or phenomenon, eventually becoming an integral and stable attribute of its representation in folklore discourse.

In both Russian and Uzbek cultures, epithets perform not only an aesthetic but also a cognitive function. Through them, perceptions of the world, cultural ideals, nature, and human beings are formed and transmitted. For example:

1. **In Russian folklore:** *dobryi molodets* (“**brave young man**”), *krasna devitsa* (“fair maiden”), *chistoe pole* (“open field”).
2. **In Uzbek folklore:** *yasmin yuzli* (“**jasmine-faced**”), *oltin yurak* (“**golden heart**”), *oq yo‘l* (“bright path” or “auspicious journey”).

These epithets are characterized by a high degree of conventionalization and reproducibility, and they are widely used in oral tradition, folk songs, tales, and epic narratives.

The Functions of Fixed Epithets in Folklore:

1. Characterization Function

Fixed epithets serve to establish and reinforce a stable characterization of a hero or individual within the folklore tradition:

- a. ***dobryi molodets*** (“brave young man”) symbolizes courage, valor, and nobility;
- b. ***oltin yurak inson*** (“a person with a golden heart”) represents kindness, generosity, and compassion.

2. The Aesthetic Function of Fixed Epithets

Fixed epithets enhance the imagery, expressiveness, and rhythmic quality of speech, which is of particular importance in oral performance and transmission.

3. Mnemonic Function

The repetitive nature of fixed epithets aids in the memorization and oral transmission of texts, a feature that is crucial to the continuity and preservation of folklore traditions.

4. The Cultural and Symbolic Function of Fixed Epithets

Fixed epithets serve as a reflection of a people's cultural values, beliefs, and worldview, preserving and transmitting them across generations:

- **in the Russian folklore tradition**, fixed epithets often reflect a close relationship with the natural world (e.g., *chistoe pole* — “open field”);
- **in the Uzbek folklore tradition**, they frequently emphasize moral virtues and ethical values (e.g., *pok niyat* — “pure intention”).



Specific Features of the Russian Folklore Tradition:



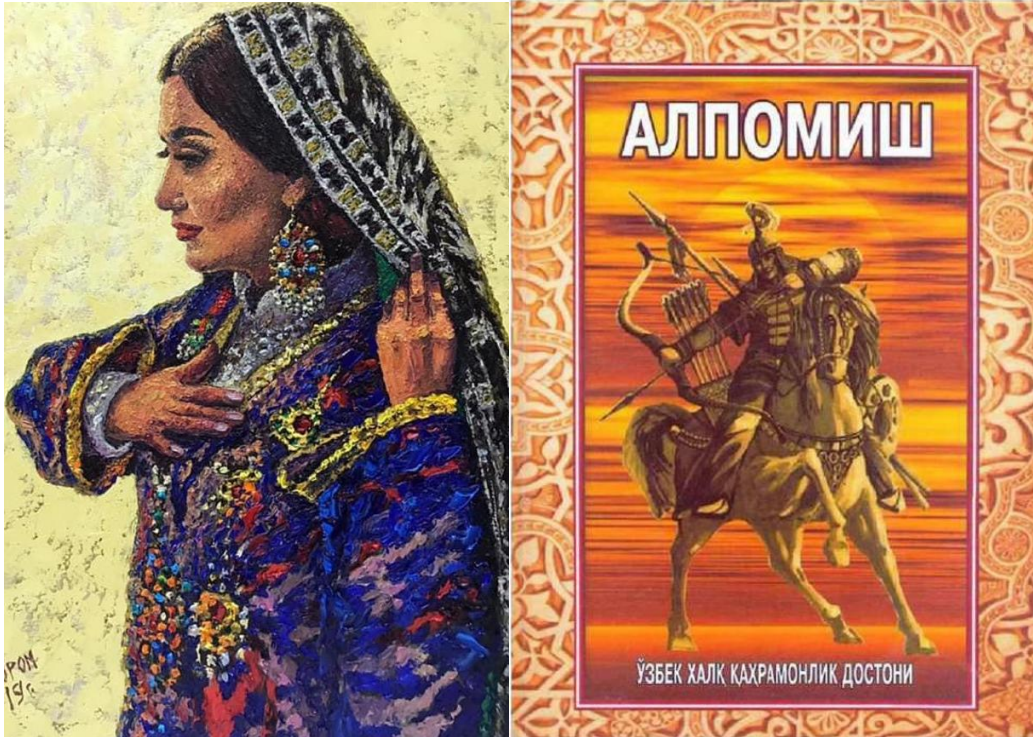
Russian fixed epithets are characterized by a number of distinctive features, including:

- a close connection with nature (*tëmnyi les* — “dark forest,” *shirokaya step*’ — “vast steppe”);
- the use of diminutive and affectionate forms;
- rhythmic stability and formulaic repetition.

The epithet *krasna devitsa* (“fair maiden”) not only denotes external beauty but also symbolizes moral purity.

The epithet ***dobryi molodets*** (“brave young man”) represents the ideal image of a man—courageous, honest, and strong.

Specific Features of the Uzbek Folklore Tradition:



IN UZBEK FOLKLORE, EPITHETS ARE DISTINGUISHED BY:

- vivid metaphorical imagery (*gul yuzli* — “flower-faced”);
- frequent use of nature-based images and precious materials (*oltin* — “gold,” *marvarid* — “pearl”);
- poetic hyperbolization.

For example:

- ***oltin yurak*** (“golden heart”) — a symbol of kindness and generosity;
- ***shakar so‘z*** (“sweet word”) — pleasant and kind speech.

These epithets are closely connected with the Eastern poetic tradition and reflect ideals of beauty, harmony, and aesthetic perfection.

Conclusion:

The system of fixed epithets in Russian and Uzbek folklore traditions represents an important element of national culture. Epithets not only embellish speech but also function as carriers of cultural codes. Through them, ideals of beauty, moral values, and distinctive features of a people's worldview are transmitted. A comparative analysis shows that, despite differences in imagery and stylistic expression, both traditions are similar in their core function—namely, in shaping a stable and recognizable worldview.

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