

REFLECTION OF EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCES IN THE LYRICS OF USMON AZIM THROUGH MYTHICAL IMAGES

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Abstract: Mythological imagery provides lyrical poetry with symbolic depth and cultural resonance, allowing the lyrical subject to connect personal emotions with collective heritage. Within contemporary Uzbek literature, Usmon Azim is notable for reinterpreting legendary and folkloric figures to intensify the emotional dimensions of his poetry. Characters such as Daedalus, Icarus, and Majnun, drawn from classical and oral traditions, are reshaped into archetypes that reflect modern existential concerns.

The study employs qualitative textual analysis supported by a comparative literary approach. Selected poems are analyzed in relation to their mythological origins, with particular attention to symbolic transformations and the integration of folkloric motifs. This method allows for tracing the continuity of cultural archetypes within a modern lyrical framework.

Findings indicate that Azim transforms static mythological symbols into dynamic embodiments of inner experience. By harmonizing universal archetypes with contemporary sensibilities, he enriches both the semantic structure and emotional resonance of his poetry. His reworking of myths demonstrates how inherited motifs sustain relevance in the present.

The research concludes that Usmon Azim's poetic practice exemplifies the adaptability of myth in modern literary discourse. Through reinterpreting legendary figures, he not only preserves cultural memory but also expands the expressive capacity of contemporary Central Asian poetry.

Keywords: Usmon Azim, lyrical hero, emotional experience, mythical imagery, folklore, intertextuality, Central Asian literature.

1. Introduction

Literature, as an artistic phenomenon, has evolved over centuries through a continuous process of creative expression. Legendary and mythical figures—from epics, folklore, and oral traditions—are enduring elements in this evolution, constantly reinterpreted to reflect emerging cultural contexts (Shukurova & Avezova, 2020). Throughout its history, poets and writers have developed a vast range of poetic, prosaic, and dramatic images, reflecting the aesthetic ideals and cultural values of their time. Among these, the incorporation of legendary and mythical figures—drawn from epics, folklore, and oral traditions—has remained a recurring practice (Umurov, n.d.). Such figures, deeply rooted in the collective memory of a people, are often reinterpreted to suit new historical and cultural contexts.

In lyrical genres, the adaptation of mythological and legendary characters assumes a particularly significant role. These figures acquire a renewed spiritual and emotional dimension, enriching

the lyrical text with symbolic depth and expanding its interpretative possibilities. Contemporary poetry demonstrates a sustained interest in revisiting and transforming these inherited images, not merely as decorative allusions, but as active participants in the poetic narrative.

The works of Usmon Azim provide a notable example of this approach. His poetry integrates characters from myth and legend into the inner world of the lyrical hero, endowing them with emotional resonance and psychological complexity. This practice transforms static cultural symbols into dynamic embodiments of lived human experience, thus establishing a bridge between tradition and modernity.

By examining such adaptations, this study aims to investigate how mythical imagery functions as a medium for expressing the lyrical hero's emotional and spiritual states in Usmon Azim's poetry. In doing so, it seeks to highlight the poet's unique contribution to the ongoing dialogue between literary heritage and contemporary sensibilities within Central Asian literature.

2. Literature Review

Imagery plays a foundational role in conveying emotional depth in poetry, engaging readers' senses and facilitating interpretation (Yuldasheva & Abduramonova, 2024). This visual and symbolic dimension is further highlighted in analyses of mythopoetic structures in Turkic oral epics, where heroes inhabit a "mythological space" that echoes ancient communal consciousness (Sayfulina, Aimukhambet, & Faizullina, 2020). In Azerbaijani poetry, folkloric images—such as the firebird, crane, and deer—undergo transformations that retain symbolic meaning while acquiring modern relevance (Garayeva, 2023). The convergence of old and new in imagery highlights the dynamic adaptability of mythological symbols in lyrical expression. In literary scholarship, the role of imagery in shaping meaning and emotional depth has been a consistent focus of analysis. Scholars have identified various types of imagery—epic, lyrical, dramatic, imaginative-fantastic, mythical, allegorical, ironic, satirical, and humorous—as outlined by Umurov (n.d.) in his classification of stylistic and expressive means within different literary types and genres. Among these, mythical and legendary imagery occupies a distinctive position due to its deep cultural roots and symbolic richness.

Mythic and folkloric characters, preserved through centuries of oral tradition, serve as a collective repository of cultural memory. Their adaptability enables authors to enrich literary works with layers of symbolic resonance and intertextual meaning. The practice of integrating such characters into lyrical narratives extends beyond mere allusion; it often involves a transformation that aligns these figures with contemporary themes and emotional realities.

The study of lyrical emotions—how literature conveys the inner experiences of its characters—has been addressed extensively in both classical and modern literary criticism. Foundational theoretical perspectives have been provided by figures such as Hegel (1975), Timofeev (1965), Zhirmunsky (1971), Mayakovsky (1973), Shmelev (1983), Sarimsoqov (1990), Yashar (1999), Turdimov (2005), Rahimjonov (2012), and Hamdamov (2010). Their research has contributed

significantly to understanding the function of emotional expression in literature and provides an essential framework for the present analysis.

While previous studies have explored the symbolic and cultural significance of legendary characters, fewer have examined their role in articulating the emotional and psychological states of lyrical heroes in contemporary Central Asian poetry. This gap underscores the relevance of focusing on Usmon Azim's works, in which traditional images are recontextualized to serve as vessels of modern emotional discourse.

3. Research Methodology

This research employs a qualitative textual analysis to examine the integration of mythical imagery into the lyrical framework of Usmon Azim's poetry. The methodological approach combines close reading with comparative literary analysis, enabling a detailed exploration of how selected mythical and folkloric characters are adapted to express the emotional and spiritual states of the lyrical hero. Primary sources for the study consist of selected poems in which mythical motifs and legendary figures—such as Daedalus, Icarus, and Majnun—are central to the poetic narrative. These works are analyzed in relation to their original appearances in classical literature, oral tradition, and mythological heritage. The comparison allows for identifying transformations in meaning, symbolism, and emotional intensity when these figures are relocated into a modern lyrical context. This approach aligns with research on myth-based literary reinterpretation, where poetic symbolism is viewed as a mechanism for cultural continuity and psychological insight (Sayfulina et al., 2020; Yuldasheva & Abduramonova, 2024).

The analysis focuses on three main aspects:

1. Character Adaptation – how legendary figures are reshaped to reflect contemporary emotional and philosophical concerns.
2. Symbolic Function – the role of mythical imagery in deepening the semantic and emotive layers of the lyrical text.
3. Intertextual Resonance – the connections between the adapted characters and their traditional literary or folkloric sources.

By situating Usmon Azim's recontextualizations within broader theoretical perspectives on lyrical emotion and myth-based symbolism, the study aims to demonstrate how traditional archetypes are revitalized to serve as powerful vehicles for modern poetic expression.

4. Results and discussion

4.1. General Observations

Usmon Azim demonstrates remarkable skill in employing mythical imagery as a means of illuminating the psychological and emotional dimensions of his lyrical heroes. This creative strategy enables abstract feelings to acquire tangible, symbolic form, thereby expanding the

emotional scope of his poetry. By refining and adapting these figures to match the rhythm of emotional expression, the poet achieves a seamless integration between traditional motifs and contemporary lyrical flow.

4.2. Case Study: “Daedalus and Icarus”

In the poem *Daedalus and Icarus*, Usmon Azim reinterprets figures from ancient Greek mythology within a lyrical framework. The myth, well known from Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, narrates the ingenuity of Daedalus and the tragic overreach of his son Icarus. In Azim’s adaptation, Icarus becomes a symbol of unrestrained human aspiration, embodying the yearning for absolute freedom, while Daedalus represents tempered wisdom shaped by life’s hardships.

4.3. Case Study: “I Am Majnun”

The poem *I Am Majnun* draws upon Majnun, the tragic lover of classical Oriental literature. In Usmon Azim’s reimagining, the lyrical hero likens himself to Majnun, yet his “Layli” is God Himself—transforming the narrative from romantic longing into mystical devotion.

4.4. Broader Use of Folkloric and Legendary Characters

Beyond these examples, Usmon Azim frequently draws upon Uzbek oral folklore, particularly in the *Baxshiyona* cycle, where figures such as Alpomish, Oqbotir, Qorabotir, and Yodgor function as carriers of the lyrical hero’s emotional depth.

5. Conclusion

Usmon Azim’s poetry integrates mythical and folkloric imagery to articulate the emotional and psychological states of the lyrical hero. This approach transforms static cultural symbols into dynamic embodiments of human experience, harmonizing traditional motifs with contemporary themes.

Recommendations:

1. Conduct comparative analyses of other Central Asian poets’ use of myth.
2. Apply interdisciplinary perspectives from folklore studies, anthropology, and comparative literature.
3. Investigate reader reception of myth-based lyrical works in different cultural contexts.

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