



Article

Interpretation of Color Symbolism

Jumatova Nasiba Saburovna*¹

1. University of Management and Future Technologies "Filologiya va tillar" kafedrası dotsenti, filologiya fanlari nomzodi, Uzbekistan
* Correspondence: nasibajumatova68@gmail.com

Abstract: Symbolism has played a foundational role in human artistic expression, with color symbols particularly enduring in literature and folklore across civilizations. In Uzbek folk literature, especially in proverbs, color symbolism functions not only as an artistic device but also as a repository of historical beliefs, values, and cultural memory. While the symbolic meanings of colors have been noted in general terms, their specific functions and semantic layers in Uzbek folk proverbs have not been thoroughly explored from a historical and cultural-linguistic perspective. This study investigates the historical roots, semantic depth, and expressive function of color symbolism in Uzbek proverbs, emphasizing how specific colors like black, white, red, yellow, and blue convey complex cultural and emotional meanings. The research reveals that color symbols in proverbs are not merely decorative but serve to encode collective experiences, religious beliefs, moral judgments, and societal norms. For instance, black symbolizes evil and shame, white represents purity and virtue, red signifies love and wealth, and yellow indicates longing and illness. The study offers a comprehensive linguistic and semiotic interpretation of color-based symbolism within the folk genre, grounded in ancient cosmological and cultural beliefs, showing how brevity and depth coexist in proverbial expression. Understanding color symbolism in Uzbek proverbs enhances appreciation of cultural heritage and demonstrates how symbolic language shapes national identity, ethical thought, and intergenerational communication.

Keywords: Folklore, Symbols, Color Symbols, Folk Proverbs

Citation: Saburovna, J. N. Interpretation of Color Symbolism. Central Asian Journal of Literature, Philosophy, and Culture 2025, 6(3), 275-280.

Received: 10th May 2025
Revised: 18th May 2025
Accepted: 25th May 2025
Published: 7th Jun 2025



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1. Introduction

Symbolism has historically functioned as a potent instrument in artistic expression, especially in poetry and folkloric traditions, facilitating the conveyance of deep emotional and intellectual ideas using succinct and metaphorical language [1]. Among the most enduring and evocative symbolic elements are colours, which, grounded in ancient human vision and cultural beliefs, have transcended time to maintain their expressive potency [2]. In Uzbek folk literature, particularly in proverbs, colour symbolism is essential in conveying the knowledge, morals, and worldview of the populace. The colors—black, white, red, blue, green, and yellow—serve not just as aesthetic elements but also as profound cultural symbols that embody collective experiences, historical memory, and religious meanings [3]. The colour black signifies malevolence or disgrace, whereas white is associated with purity, virtue, and tranquilly. Red embodies dual meaning, symbolising both aggression and passion, alongside riches and life. These linkages, frequently originating from primitive human efforts to comprehend the natural and spiritual realms, were progressively inscribed into oral traditions and have been transmitted between centuries [4]. The examination of these symbols is vital for comprehending the creativity

and influence of proverbs, as well as for valuing the intricate psychological and cultural contexts from which they originated. Analysing the use and significance of colour in Uzbek folk proverbs reveals how symbolism enriches literary representation and how lasting cultural values are maintained through ostensibly simple, yet profoundly intricate, verbal forms [5].

2. Materials and Methods

This study employs a methodological framework grounded in literary analysis and interpretative approaches to uncover the symbolic meanings of colours in Uzbek folk proverbs. The study initiates by detecting colour symbols in well-known proverbs by qualitative content analysis, utilising data from oral traditions and recorded folklore compilations [6]. The approach examines historical, cultural, and philosophical aspects by tracing the origins of symbolic colour usage to basic ideas and cosmogonic perspectives of early societies. A comparative analysis reveals the meanings of colours like black, white, red, blue, and yellow in connection to their frequency in traditional expressions and their contextual significance in forming the figurative framework of proverbs. Descriptive reasoning articulates the progression of these colours from basic sensory experiences to intricate emblems of moral, spiritual, or societal ideals [7]. The research incorporates theoretical perspectives from significant texts on symbolism, such as Losev's philosophy of symbols and Sharopov's notions of creative logic, to substantiate the symbolic interpretations. The proverbs were chosen for their prevalence in folk discourse, clarity of symbolic meaning, and depth of cultural significance. The sentences were examined for semantic richness and syntactic brevity to assess how symbolism amplifies expressiveness and ideological impact. This strategy facilitated a comprehensive understanding of the role of colour symbolism as both a poetic device and a means of conserving cultural identity and ethical wisdom in oral traditions. The interpretive results enhance the wider discussion on semiotics and ethnolinguistic representation within folklore studies [8].

3. Results and Discussion

Art, especially poetry, has evolved from time immemorial in connection with symbolism [9]. Consequently, envisioning the poetic image, its core, content, and underlying idea of the poetic work is challenging without symbols. In recent years, there has been an extraordinary evolution in Uzbek poetry, often referred to as the "blood of poetry." The significance of symbols is a method for generating an image [10].

Symbolism, particularly pertaining to colour, represents the most primordial kind of artistic cognition. Z tarovati serves to illuminate with its magnificence. The adept and judicious application of poetic symbols enables artists to convey the zeitgeist, the aspirations of the populace, and human experiences in a succinct, significant, and impactful manner. The association of symbolic imagery with colour enhances artistic expression, evoking the profound amazement and delight anticipated by the poet in their audience [11]. The examination of symbols is crucial, as it elucidates the nature of this enchanting being and demonstrates its impact on contemporary psychology. Prior to examining the symbolic imagery linked to colour, it is essential to succinctly explore the concept of a symbol, its significance in human existence, and its function within a piece of art. What constitutes a symbol? What is its fundamental nature? These enquiries have been presented to humanity since the era of Aristotle, and subsequently, every scientist has adeptly addressed this topic with much authority. Instead of merely expressing, we articulate our comprehension by generalising prevailing perspectives regarding the symbol. Symbolism, in its most expansive definition, is an image formed via direct observation of an occurrence. A symbol serves as a representation of an event. A symbol inherently serves as a particular generalisation of an event, denoting the singular thing it symbolises [12]. The respected Russian philosopher A.F. Losev observed that a symbol represents something; yet, any content or essence cannot serve as a symbol. The

conclusion is that the substance of an object's content cannot be its symbol. For an object's meaning and essence to transform into a symbol, they must be reinterpreted in a particular manner and elevated to a standard that is widely acknowledged by the majority under specified conditions. For an object's content to transform into a symbol and for generalisation to expand significantly, it must possess numerous semantic dimensions. It comprises a perspective that embodies a concept. Consequently, the symbol lacks a clear and precise definition in any scientific, journalistic, encyclopaedic, or industry-specific lexicon. The symbol is so intricate and multidimensional that it is hard to encompass all its attributes in a single calculation. This likely explains why the term "symbol" is defined in two distinct manners in nearly all dictionaries [13].

1. In a narrow sense, the term refers to special symbols used in the natural, philosophical sciences, as well as in the practical life of man. For example, "x" (x) or "y" (igrek), all the signs in the rules of the road, state emblems and h, k.
2. The term "symbol" broadly embraces the concept of image across all artistic forms and its intricate dimensions. To comprehend the substance of the artistic symbol and its function within the poem, one must recognise the conditionality of the artistic movement inherent in the symbol, the logical foundation of the symbol, and the historical and national characteristics. According to Ri, while creative conditionality elicits emotional excitation inside the symbol, the logical foundation facilitates the discovery of its inflated significance. In accurately delineating the logical foundation The historical context and the convictions of any nation are significant factors. The logical foundation of the symbol is inherently complicated, and its definition is contingent upon the artistic symbolic representation. The outcome is contingent upon the precision and the poet's capacity to comprehend art. The artistic emblem conveys the image. The image reveals its vibrant edges during movement [14].

No nation exists that has not produced masterpieces of wisdom, articulated its religious convictions through them, and been cherished for generations as if it were the apple of its eye. "Proverbs emerge in the advanced phases of primitive culture and possess the quality of enduring over time." Symbols that have become evident in the evolution of human artistic cognition are extensively employed to convey ideas clearly, simply, and figuratively. One such genre is folk proverbs. Colour symbols are significant in folk proverbs, which serve as a compendium of example concepts validated through centuries of collective human experience. Indeed, numerous symbols are linked to various motifs in folk proverbs. It is unfeasible to elaborate on each of them. Consequently, we will provide commentary on several of them below. G. Vemberi, a prominent European orientalist, visited our country in the latter half of the last century and remarked upon his return, "In Central Asia, a region historically rich in poetic expression, young lovers, priests, and aristocrats, enamoured with one another, exhibit a shared interest in all poetic works..." Proverbs exist in both written literature and spoken discourse, present in the halls of the deceased and the transient pastures of nomads [15].

The origins of color-related symbols can be traced back to the beliefs of prehistoric humans. The human mind, lacking the capacity to formulate intricate abstract concepts, endeavoured to symbolise basic factual ideas and delineated the obscurity. Throughout the day, he had no challenges in hunting or engaging in combat with others. He was able to perceive his surroundings clearly, thereby comprehending the topographical structure of his location thoroughly. In the nocturnal darkness, the contrary prevailed, and he endured considerable suffering. Consequently, it is dark. His fear of death resulted in the conceptualisation of black as a sign of malevolence and terror in his imagination. Light was represented in white as virtue, solace, and abundance. The hue of blood in humans and animals slain during hunting or warfare is red, which has come to symbolise conflict and sacrifice.

In antiquity, the deities resided in the heavens, and the belief that human souls were subject to the whims of these gods established the colour blue as a celestial emblem. Blue is a celestial hue and a unifying force for the spirits of the deceased. The aforementioned reasons indicate that the colours white, black, blue, red, green, and yellow were

symbolised significantly earlier than other color-related symbols in ancient religious concepts. These colours have preserved their religious significance to this day. The symbols linked to these colours are frequently employed in art. In Uzbek folk proverbs, black symbolises malevolence. This colour has consistently represented evil and terror in the collective consciousness of individuals. The figurative depiction of the malevolent figure in black imparted expressiveness, impact, and conciseness to the piece. This approach defies the spiritual and moral principles of our community with black faces. This notion serves as a poetic emblem in folklore. In the article "The Face That is Separated from the People Will Be Black," the face symbolises blackness, humiliation, and inferiority. In folk proverbs, not just words denoting colour but also other terms acquire symbolic significance through colour identifiers. The term "earth" denotes the planet that sustains all life and bears the entirety of existence. Prior to that term, the symbolic significance of the scientist was established by referencing the colour descriptor "Black". The colour black in the saying "Be a land, if you are not a land, be a black land" and the symbolic imagery associated with this colour have significantly contributed to the succinct, impactful, and figurative articulation of the wise, exemplary concepts of the populace. All are guided by the old concepts and perspectives of those connected to black culture. The universality of this colour and imagination enabled the article to transform this hue into an artistic representation. The symbolic picture enhances the artistry, appeal, and impact of the work.

One such hue is white. This hue represents virtue, innocence, sophistication, and vitality. Uzbek traditional proverbs have numerous symbolic representations of the colour white. They encapsulate the essence of the proverb's meaning. In folklore, the colour white is seldom regarded as a significant symbol. In numerous locations, this colour signifies a certain meaning or occasion. "A white dog is, after all, a dog, just like a black dog." The significance of the compound symbol in this adage is that all malevolent individuals possess malevolent intentions. In these symbols, the essence, or defining significance, is attributed to the dog. Consequently, the canine emblem in the adage signifies a malevolent individual. The article is indifferent to the significance of white and black. The symbolism of the white dog and the black dog differ from the black and white representation of the malevolent figure in the article, as they collectively denote negativity. In the subsequent piece, the colour white signifies autonomy: "If you desire my face to be white, act appropriately." The white visage represents an age-old emblem of virtue, tranquilly, and justice, devoid of shame. Consequently, the association of the colour white as a sign in this instance originates from the ancient perceptions of this hue by the populace. One other point merits attention. The historical association of white with virtue arises from the utility of some white objects to humanity. Milk has historically been recognised as advantageous to humans. Consequently, individuals did not consistently use the term milk, but instead coined a phrase derived from the category of adjectives that characterise its hue. Consequently, the term that characterises the characteristic of colour has evolved to explicitly denote the white object itself. The term is interpreted differently by individuals, hence it functions as a symbol linked to colour. For instance, "In the presence of whiteness, pain is absent." The term "white milk" derives from a white symbol that signifies yoghurt. This term indicates that the patient must refrain from consuming milk and yoghurt to avoid illness, implying that he should consistently ingest milk and yoghurt. denotes bread. Uzbek folk proverbs feature numerous symbols linked to the colour white, with their meanings traditionally associated with attributes such as kindness, tranquilly, righteousness, health, and illumination.

The colour red is prevalent in Uzbek mythology. This colour sign is also linked to the old cosmogonic beliefs of the populace. hemorrhagic region. Subsequently, redness evolved into a sign embodying both negative and positive connotations, grounded in multiple perspectives. Folklorist Sh. Turdimov interprets it as a symbol with bad connotations, encompassing battle and bloodshed, but also recognising its positive

symbolism. According to the settings, it signifies concepts like as warmth, femininity, affection, gold, and affluence. In the subsequent piece, the colour red represents love: "Girls are drawn to red, the merchant to wealth." This article juxtaposes the avarice of girls for love with the avarice of a merchant for money and fortune. Adult women approach men to convey their affection and esteem. This trait of naive young females is symbolically depicted through the merchants' insatiable desire for wealth. The "red" symbol significantly contributed to the lucid and succinct articulation of the aphorism. In the subsequent article, the colour red signifies gold. "The crimson cup will mislead Khidr." The adage explicitly asserts that no one, including a saint, possesses a human head when confronted with a human trap. Consequently, although Khidr represents a global archetype, crimson signifies currency, affluence, and gold. Multiple iterations of the adage are employed, including "Kizil khizni aynitar," "Kizil korsa, khizir ozar," and "Kizildan qazi da uyalar." Furthermore, in folklore, the colour yellow symbolises separation, desire, disease, and yearning. In folklore, the symbolism of colour is both ancient and distinctly employed. Moreover, the colour symbolism in folk proverbs are linked to the ancient religious beliefs of the populace.

This implies that, as articulated by A.P. Chekhov, "Brevity is the sister of talent"; thus, symbolic imagery linked to colour can not only establish the essential characteristic of the short genre—conciseness—but also enhance its scope and extend its longevity does.

4. Conclusion

An examination of colour symbolism in Uzbek traditional proverbs uncovers the profound historical, cultural, and psychological dimensions ingrained in the collective consciousness of the populace. The symbolic significances of colours like black, white, red, yellow, and blue have developed from primal religious convictions and ancient interpretations of the natural environment, gaining substantial expressive potency in oral literature. These colours function as visual elements and as conduits for expressing abstract concepts, emotions, and ethical principles succinctly and effectively. Black, conventionally linked to terror and malevolence, signifies shame and dishonour, whereas white embodies purity, virtue, and health. Red signifies dual connotations—violence and passion, alongside love and affluence—contingent upon the situation, while yellow frequently denotes yearning or malaise. The conversion of basic colours into powerful symbolic representations illustrates the cerebral profundity and creative complexity of Uzbek proverbs. These proverbs preserve their relevance and allure over generations by encapsulating intricate human experiences and societal values through colour symbolism. Moreover, the findings emphasise that symbolic language, despite its antiquity, continues to be an essential element of artistic expression and cultural identity. This research emphasises the aesthetic and semantic importance of colour symbols, as well as their ability to embody national identity and facilitate moral contemplation. The ongoing research and preservation of these symbolic forms is crucial for valuing and maintaining the history of Uzbek oral art and its role in global folklore traditions.

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