

**THE PHENOMENON OF FOLKLORISM AND THE
MANIFESTATION OF PSEUDONYMS ACROSS FOLKLORE GENRES**

Hamroyeva Muborak Jumanazarovna

Graduate student of Webster University

Abstract. *Folklore is an important component of the spiritual and cultural heritage of a nation, reflecting its worldview, historical experience, traditions, beliefs, and aesthetic values. In the course of cultural development, folkloric elements are not limited to their traditional oral environment but are also reproduced and transformed in literary and other cultural contexts. This process is commonly associated with the phenomenon of folklorism. The present thesis examines the relationship between folklorism and pseudonymity, focusing on the manifestation of pseudonyms and alternative naming practices in different folklore genres. Particular attention is given to the relationship between pseudonyms, nicknames, symbolic names, epithets, and anonymity. The study demonstrates that alternative names in folklore perform not only an identifying function but also social, aesthetic, symbolic, historical, and cultural functions. Their use in proverbs, legends, folk tales, narratives, and folk songs contributes to the preservation of collective memory and cultural identity. The study concludes that the analysis of pseudonymity within folklorism provides an important perspective for understanding the interaction between individual identity, oral tradition, and collective cultural memory.*

Keywords: *folklore, folklorism, pseudonym, pseudonymity, nickname, alternative naming, folklore genres, cultural memory, identity, oral tradition.*



Introduction: folklore is one of the principal forms of cultural memory through which societies preserve and transmit their historical experience, worldview, traditions, beliefs, and aesthetic values. It includes proverbs, sayings, legends, myths, folk tales, songs, narratives, rituals, and other forms of traditional expression. Contemporary folkloristics increasingly considers folklore not merely as a collection of texts but as a dynamic process of communication and cultural transmission. Dan Ben-Amos defines folklore in terms of artistic communication within small groups, thereby emphasizing performance, context, and interaction. The development of literature and culture has led to close interaction between folklore and written artistic creativity. Traditional plots, motifs, images, characters, proverbs, sayings, rituals, and forms of folk speech are frequently incorporated into literary works and other forms of cultural expression. This process is referred to as folklorism. Folklorism can be understood as the creative use, reinterpretation, adaptation, or transformation of folkloric elements in a new cultural or artistic context. The study of folklorism is particularly important for Uzbek philology because Uzbek literature and oral tradition have historically developed through close interaction. Traditional folklore continues to influence contemporary literary and cultural expression. At the same time, individual elements of folklore may undergo semantic and functional transformation.

One such element is the name. Names in folklore are not simply means of identifying characters. They can express social status, origin, occupation, personal characteristics, historical memory, and cultural values. In this context, pseudonyms, nicknames, symbolic names, and epithets deserve special attention.

Folklorism and Alternative Naming

A pseudonym is generally understood as an assumed name used instead of a person's real name. In literary culture, pseudonyms are usually associated with individual authorship. A writer may adopt a pseudonym for artistic, social, political, or personal reasons. Folklore, however, presents a more complex situation because many folkloric texts have no identifiable individual author and are transmitted collectively. Therefore, pseudonymity in folklore should be examined together with related phenomena such as anonymity, nicknames, epithets, and symbolic naming. These forms may replace the original personal name and establish a secondary identity. The distinction between a pseudonym and a nickname is important. A pseudonym is generally chosen or adopted by the individual, whereas a nickname is often given to a person by other members of a community. Nevertheless, both may become stable identifiers and acquire cultural significance. Research on folk nicknames shows that they can function as a folkloric genre and encode social information through culturally meaningful signs. In folklore, alternative names can emerge from various characteristics of an individual: appearance, behavior, occupation, place of origin, personality, a particular event, or a memorable action. After repeated oral transmission, such a name may become more significant than the original personal name.

Consequently, the name becomes a form of cultural memory. It can preserve not only information about an individual but also the community's attitude toward that individual.

Manifestation of Pseudonyms in Folklore Genres

The manifestation of alternative naming differs according to the characteristics of individual folklore genres. In proverbs and sayings, individual

authorship is generally unknown. A statement originally created by an individual may lose its authorial identity through repeated transmission and become recognized as collective wisdom. This phenomenon can be described as collective anonymity. The disappearance of the original author's name does not eliminate identity completely; rather, individual identity is transformed into collective cultural identity.

In legends and historical narratives, names may preserve information about historical or semi-historical personalities. During oral transmission, a historical figure may acquire a nickname, epithet, or symbolic designation. As the narrative develops, the alternative name may become an essential part of the character's folkloric identity. In this way, folklorism transforms historical memory into an artistic and collective representation. In folk tales, names perform important aesthetic and characterizing functions. A character may be identified by a personal name, nickname, descriptive designation, or symbolic name. Such names frequently indicate the character's appearance, personality, social status, or role in the narrative. Research on Uzbek folk tales confirms that anthroponyms constitute an important component of their artistic structure and possess lexical, semantic, expressive, and communicative functions.

In folk songs, names can acquire emotional, symbolic, and historical meanings. A personal name mentioned in a song may represent an individual person, a beloved figure, a historical hero, or even a broader cultural image. Through repeated performance, the original individual identity can become transformed into a collective symbolic representation.

Alternative naming is also particularly significant in epic traditions. Heroes may be known through epithets or additional names that emphasize their courage, strength, wisdom, lineage, or social position. Such naming contributes to the artistic characterization of the hero and facilitates the preservation and transmission of the epic narrative.

Cultural and Linguistic Functions of Pseudonyms

The analysis of naming practices in folklore demonstrates that alternative names perform several interconnected functions. First, they have an identifying function, distinguishing one character or personality from others. Second, they have a characterizing function, revealing physical, psychological, moral, or behavioral characteristics. Third, they can perform a symbolic function, representing broader cultural values and concepts.

Alternative names may also have a historical function by preserving information about personalities and events. Their social function is expressed through references to occupation, status, origin, or social relationships. Finally, their cultural function is manifested in the preservation of collective memory. Studies of proper names in folklore indicate that names can encode substantial historical, social, geographical, and cultural information [3]. Thus, the analysis of names should be considered an important part of the interpretation of folklore texts.

From the perspective of folklorism, the transformation of a personal name into a symbolic or collective designation demonstrates how individual identity can be incorporated into cultural memory. A person who originally had a particular

historical identity may acquire another identity through folklore. This secondary identity is created and maintained by the community through oral transmission.

Conclusion

The phenomenon of folklorism demonstrates the dynamic interaction between traditional folklore and new cultural contexts. Through folklorism, traditional motifs, characters, genres, images, and naming practices are preserved while simultaneously being transformed and reinterpreted. The analysis presented in this thesis shows that pseudonymity in folklore should not be limited to the conventional literary understanding of a pseudonym. It is closely connected with anonymity, nicknames, epithets, symbolic names, and other forms of alternative identification. These phenomena are manifested differently across folklore genres but share an important function: the transformation of individual identity into a culturally meaningful representation.

In proverbs and sayings, this process is expressed primarily through collective anonymity; in legends and narratives, through symbolic or alternative names; in folk tales, through characterizing and descriptive names; and in folk songs and epics, through emotionally and culturally significant names and epithets.

Therefore, pseudonyms and alternative naming practices can be considered important elements of folkloric poetics and cultural memory. Their study contributes to a deeper understanding of the relationship between language, folklore, identity, and cultural continuity. Further research into Uzbek folklore may provide a systematic classification of pseudonyms, nicknames, epithets, and symbolic names according to their semantic, functional, stylistic, and ethnocultural characteristics.

REFERENCES:

1. Ben-Amos, D. (2014). A definition of folklore: A personal narrative. *Estudis de Literatura Oral Popular / Studies in Oral Folk Literature*, 3, 9–28. <https://doi.org/10.17345/elop20149-28>.
2. Bauman, R. (Ed.). (1992). *Folklore, Cultural Performances, and Popular Entertainments: A Communications-Centered Handbook*. Oxford University Press.
3. Fuller, M. (1965). “The Naming of Names” in Indian folk belief. *Asian Folklore Studies*, 24(1), 63–79. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1177597>.
4. Pinto-Abecasis, N. (2011). Towards the inclusion of nicknames in the genres of folklore: The case of the former Jewish community of Tetuan, Morocco. *Folklore*, 122(2), 135–154. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0015587X.2011.570520>.
5. Qilichev, B. E., Kholmukhamedov, B. F., Zaripov, B. P., & Rahmatullaev, S. N. (2021). Anthroponyms in Uzbek folk tales: Problem with content and frequency. *Thematics Journal of Education*.
6. Solijonova, S. A. (2025). The study of folklorisms in Uzbek philology. *American Journal of Philological Sciences*, 5(6), 133–135.
7. UNESCO. (2003). *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*. UNESCO.