Poetic Meters of Afghan Persian Folk Couplets

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ABSTRACT
Folk couplets are considered to be one of the most important parts of our oral literature, which were formed over many centuries among the people of Khorasan, and were passed down orally from generation to generation. For the reason that the composers of the couplets were common people; in terms of prosody, there are many differences in these couplets. Scrutinizing this point can help us in understanding these folkloric couplets and future research in this field. The purpose of research in the field of vernacular couplets is to clarify the quality and prosody of vernacular couplets in the Persian language in Afghanistan. In this study, firstly, the issue of short initial vowel tension: inflectional v, and added fraction in the Persian dialect of Afghanistan is discussed and then the different rhythms of these folk couplets such as couplet scale, prosody of quatrain, and scale of syllable, were comprehensively investigated. And with we have shown it by example. For this purpose, the couplets that had been written, are collected by the field research method and books. Thus, songs of the kosher (Asadullah Shour), Tajik couplets (Enayatullah Shahrani), Sangardi hai Panjshir (Nilab Rahimi), folk couplets of the people of Ghor (Nabi Saqi) and Couplets of the people of Hazara (Mohammad Jawad Khavari) have been analysed.

Keywords: Folk couplets, Afghanistan, the prosody of couplets, Syllable, Metre, Rhythm

1-Introduction
The folk couplets (Do-bayti or Fahlaviyat) are prominent components of folk and oral literature and are one of Afghanistan's precious spiritual and cultural heritages. This rich cultural legacy, which often incorporates lyrical themes and whose author is primarily unknown, was formed across many centuries and has been handed down orally from one generation to the next. Folk couplets originate from our forefathers' beliefs, experiences, and emotions about various facets of life and are composed in straightforward language. Folk couplets are formed from twelve-syllable quatrains that have evolved into prosodic poetry. This
kind of poetry is exemplified by couplet songs such as Sorūd-e Kūdakān-e Balkh or Balkh kid's hymn (az khotalan āmazyā...: He's arriving from Khotalan), which relate to the events that took place between 726-736 (108-119 A.H). Another example is a couplet by Abbās Bin Tarkhān, a poet from the second century A.H., lamenting the demolition of Samarkand (samarghan mand...: O! my lovely Samarkand) (Zolfaghari, 2015: 70). Folk couplets are regarded the most popular folklore poems because they have a brief metric and a suitable pattern that is useful for communicating a mood and describing emotions and sentiments and because less effort is required for rhyme-meditating as well as applying prosodic meters (Mahjoub, 2015: 86). Thirty-three percent of Iran's 302 Persian folkloric poetry patterns are composed using the folk couplets form (Zolfaghari, 2015: 86). In Badakhshan and some parts of Takhar, the couplets are called “Falak”; in Panjshir, they are referred to as “Sangerdi”; in the Uzbek language they are known as “Qsūhagh,” and in Pashto, they are called “Lanadi” (Shahrani, 1991: 509).

2- Literature Review

Compared to other countries, Afghanistan's researchers have conducted a minimal number of studies on oral literature and, specifically, folk couplets. The earliest compilation of oral literature in Afghanistan was in a publication called "Seraj al Akhbar." Nevertheless, the first scientific effort in this regard was made by the "Kabul Literary Academy" in 1939 (1318 A.H), when it issued a handbook entitled "Folklore Guide," authored by Sarvar Guya E’temadi. After the closure of this literary academy and its transformation into "Pashto Tulneh," written publications on oral literature were generated randomly. For instance, in 1950, Dr. Javid acquired vital data with the assistance of pupils from a Kabul school named "Habibie School" and published them in the journal "Ariana" (Bakhtariani, 2010). However, Dr. Asadollah Sho'ur was the first to collect and research folk couplets from Afghanistan. In this regard, he penned a book entitled "Tarneh-hāye Kohsār" (Songs from Mountains), which was published by the Ministry of Information and Culture (Afghanistan Folklore Collection). In addition to discussing various literary topics in the introduction of this book, the author examines the meters of folk couplets. In a subsequent work titled "Compilation and Analysis of Herat Folk Couplets," Rahele Hosseini, a Ph.D. graduate in Persian Language and Literature from Tehran University, evaluated the couplets' meters. In their literary works, Mohammad Javad Khavari and Nabi Saqi have merely mentioned the folk couplet meters.

There are only a few publications on this particular subject, and no one has explicitly studied the meters in Afghan folk couplets. The present paper is regarded as the first ongoing effort to fill this study gap.

3- The Meter in the Folk Couplets

Rhyme and poetic meters are commonly regarded as the foundation of all poems (Zolfaghari, 2016: 13). As a result, ordinary people refer to any melodious sentence as a poem. In this regard, Nasir al-Din al-Tusi considers these two poetic elements to be the underpinning of poems (2014:7). Most folk couplets are composed using a prosodic meter called Bahr-e Hazaj-e Mosaddas-e Mahzuf or Maqsur which has six arkān (prosodic pillars): Mafāilon-Mafāilon-Fa’ulon/ Mafāil (<2). These prosodic meters are used explicitly in folk couplets and in Masnavi (a poem written in rhyming verses) and folk couplets. These meters are widely used in Baba Tahir’s Do-baytis, Nizami’s Khosro va Shirin, Golshan-e Rāz by Shabestari, Shirin va Khosro by Amir Khosro Dehlavi, Vis va Rāmin by Fakhruddin As’ad Gurgani, Farhad va Shirin by Vaḥshi Bāği, and Yousof va Zulikhā by Jāmi (Mahyar, 2017: 96-97). According to modern poetic prosody rules, the overlong syllable is equal to a long syllable, so it is called Mahzuf rather than Maqsur (Hadi, 2016: 46). This poetic meter is used in the bulk of Afghan folk couplets. The most significant aspect of Afghan folk couplets to notice is the lengthening of two vowels, /e/ and /o/: These short vowels become long vowels via elongation, and this transformation influences the meters and rhythm of the couplets.

1-3- Ezāfe Particle (ē)

In most instances, the short vowel /e/ elongation in Afghani Persian results in it being heard as /ē/. In poetic prosody handbooks, the mark [-] is appended to the short syllable, which creates a saturated Ezāfe, and is classified as a long vowel (Mahyar, 2017: 27). Concerning this subject, Abbas Mahyar quotes a verse from a sonnet by Hafiz:

*Boti Dāram Ke Gerdē Gol Ze Sonbol Sāyebān Dārad*
*Bahārē Ārezash Khati Be Khunē Arghavān Dārad*
[I have an idol whose flower-like face is surrounded by a canopy
And her spring of cheeks has a purplish blood line]

The saturated Ezāfe can be noticed in the following syllables inside the stanza above: dē, rē, nē, which are components of the words Gerdē, Bahārē, and Khunē. It is worth mentioning that in Afghanistan, the verse is pronounced as follows (i.e., by applying the saturated Ezāfe rule):

*Boti Dāram Ke Gerdē Gol Ze Sonbol Sāyebān Dārad*
*Bahārē Ārezash Khati Be Khunē Arghavān Dārad*

If the verse is pronounced in this mode, the meter will be patterned on Hazaj’s complete or basic meter (Mafāilon-Mafāilon- Mafāilon-Mafāilon). Another example is seen in a half-verse by Hafiz:

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1 Each half-line of verse contains three arkān (metric pillars), making each verse six arkān. As a result, the meter is referred to as Mosaddas, or sixfold. The final rokn, Mahzuf/Maqsur, is a shortened version of the basic meter.
Shabē Tārik- o Bimē Moj-o Gerdabi Chonin Hāyel
[The dark nightfall, the terrifying waves, and the roaring whirlpool]

The second and seventh syllables in this half-verse look short at first appearance, but according to the principle known as "poetic license," we must lengthen these short syllables as long. The syllables above are indeed pronounced identically in the Persian variant of Afghanistan: Shabē Tārik- o Bimē Moj-o Gerdabi Chonin Hāyel. Here, the meter follows the fundamental poetic meter of Hazaj (Mafāilon-Mafāilon- Mafāilon-Mafāilon). This discussion has led me to conclude that the "saturated Ezāfe " essentially refers to a "close-mid front unrounded vowel". Persian poets used short vowels instead of long vowels because, like the Persian speakers in Afghanistan, they pronounced the short vowels as "close-mid front unrounded vowels." For example, according to the following, the Ezāfe in the Mē, Tē, and Mē in words Zakhmē, Dastē, and Mardomē contain a close-mid front unrounded vowel.

Namak Shuras Be Zakhmē Tāza Nandāz
Mara Koshti Be Shahr Ávāza Nandāz
Mara Koshti Be Dastē Khod Kafan Kon
Be dastē Mardomē Bigana Nandāz

[Don't put salt on a fresh wound; it's salty / If you murder me, don't tell anybody in the city. If you murdered me, put your hands around me and bury me/ Don't permit the poor to get near m]. This poetry is recited in this manner: Mafāilon-Mafāilon-Fa’ulon.

2-3- Coordinating Conjunction (ō)
The coordinating conjunction /ō/ is elongated in the Persian accent of Afghans and is akin to the close-mid back rounded vowel, and, when coupled with the short syllable preceding it, creates a long syllable, which some literary scholars consider a poetic license (Hadi, 2016: 35). In my opinion, such literary academics had solely addressed the Iranian Persian spoken in Tehran. However, when we study the Afghan accent, we see that they are entirely incorrect. In the following folk-couplet, we can see that the vowel after the word Sayl is a coordinating conjunction, but it has been combined with the consonant "L" and has formed the long syllable, Lō. The second half-verse of the poem is pronounced as: “Chara Saylō Tamasha Mikuni Yār.”

Chara Orsi ra Bāla Mikoni Yār
Chara Saylō Tamasha Mikuni Yār
Nemitarsi Ze Fardāye Qiyāmat
Chara Qatle Jovana Mikoni Yār

[Why are you removing the sash, love?
Why are you staring at the flood, love?
You who are not afraid of the afterlife's judges
Why are you seeking the murder of young lovers, love?]
Consider the following folk couplet, in which /o/ is pronounced as the close-mid back rounded vowel in the second and third half-verses and is not removed during chunking: Gharibō Bi Kasō Āvāre Tar Nist or: Ghamō Dardē Do Ālam Āzmudam.

Ze Āsheq Hichkas Bichare Tar Nist
Gharibō Bi Kasō Āvāre Tar Nist
Ghamō Dardē Do Ālam Āzmudam
Cho Darde Āsheqi Dardē Degar Nist

[No one is more wretched than the lover.
No one is more homeless, lonely, or exiled than a lover.
I've witnessed all the miseries or pains in the universe
No pains compare to that of a lover]

This poetry is recited in this manner: Mafāilon-Mafāilon-Fa’ulon.

In such instances, the reciters extend the folk couplets' meters to conform to the prosodic standards. Dr. Shafiei Kadkani believes that the practice of prolonging the words in poems dates back to the ancient past and has been carried on to the present day; it was apparently a characteristic of pre-Islamic poetry (2007: 479). Some academics who were unfamiliar with Afghanistan and ancient Iranian Persian ascribed this characteristic to the Persian that was widespread during the early years of Islam until the 7th century A.H. They mistakenly claimed that the features of vowels and syllables in Middle Persian were such that the main difference between /ē/ and /e/ (Ezāfe) and the difference between /ō/ and /o/ (close-mid back rounded vowel) was the duration of pronunciation. As a result of the lengthening, these vowels became close-mid front unrounded vowels or close-mid back rounded vowels (Vahidiyan Kamiyar, 1978: 65-66).

According to Dr. Shou'r, there are three meters in Afghan folk couplets: the standard folk couplet meter, the quatrain meter, and the semi-prosodic meter (1974: 44-47). Based on the preceding, he gives an example of a semi-prosodic or syllabic meter that agrees with the folk couplets’ typical meter (Mafāilon-Mafāilon-Fa’ulon).

De in Kuchah Cheto Miri Be Daw Daw
Marā Bā Labz-e Awghani Zadi Daw
Age Bā Labze Awghani Befāmam
Sari Sintı Sahdat Mikonam Khaw
(Sho’ur, 1974: 45)

[How are you rushing down this alley?
You addressed me in your Afghani dialect
If I could grasp the Afghani language
I could put your white face and breast to sleep]

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2 Running
3 Chest
According to Dr. Vahidiyan Kamiyar, "some scholars think that Persian folk poetry is based on syllabic meters, while others claim that they are semi-syllabic or semi-prosodic." Some experts, on the other hand, believe the Persian folk meters are syllabic, despite the fact that there are pauses between the half-verses. Others contend that the Persian folk poem's poetic meters are both prosodic and multiplicative, with stress being the most crucial component. Others, in addition to emphasizing the syllabic elements of Persian folk poetry meters, cast doubt on prior ideas and emphasize the possibility of viewing these poems as prosodic." (1978: 21). Per the Khanlari, "the meters of folk songs, which are now prevalent in Tehran and other Iranian provinces, are neither syllabic nor prosodic, but folk poetry's meter pursues two principles: the principle of syllable quantities (this principle is the foundation of Persian official poetry) and the principle of stress" (2017: 73). These Iranian researchers' hypotheses are based primarily on their research of Iranian or local folk lyrics. I believe these Dr. Vahidiyan Kamiyar's comments are false: "in any case, the patterns of folk couplets, comparable to today's folk couplets, were totally prosodic and had nothing to do with syllabic meters." (1978: 25). In his work "the study of meter in folk poetry," he attempted to demonstrate that Persian poetic meters have been prosodic from the beginning of civilization. He also sought to characterize the early Persian songs, such as Sorūd-e Kūdakān-e Balkh, or the Balkh kid's hymn, as prosodic, although other experts believe this lyric is syllabic. Despite this, some historians believe that the Persian folk couplets may be studied by adopting Turkish poetry's syllabic meters. This is because Persian folk poetry meters are pretty close to Turkish poetry meters (syllabic-pausal-stressed meter) and share many norms (Arzhang Pour Azari, 2015: 72). According to our study, Afghan folk couplets feature two meters: prosodic and syllabic.

4- Prosodic Meter

The majority of Afghan folk couplets feature prosody meters. Many of them have been written in couplet meters, such as *Mafāilon-Mafāilon-Fa’ulon*, or *Bahr-e Hazaj-e Mosaddas-e Mahzuf*, while others have been created in quatrain meters.

1-4- Folk Couplet Meters

Most Afghan Persian folk couplets are composed using this meter (*Mafāilon-Mafāilon-Fa’ulon*, or *Bahr-e Hazaj-e Mosaddas-e Mahzuf*). For example, Hazaragi couplets (Khavari, 2015: 11), Ghor folk couplets (Saqi, 2009: 12), and the majority of Afghan folk couplets are composed in this meter. This is why Shams Qais Rāzi writes regarding the couplet meters in al-Mu’jam fi Ma’ayir Asha’r al-Ajam: "In essence, none of the designed meters and poetry composed after Khalil are more pleasant and attractive than this meter" (2009: 142).

*Hamu Khā-el Bar Ruyat Manam Yār*
*Hamu Nāranj-e Kosh Buyat Manam Yār*
*Cherā Bihude Migardi Be Sārā⁴*
*Bezan Tiri Ke Āhuyat Manam Yār*
[I'm the mole on your cheeks, love.  
I'm the orange on your chest, love.  
Why are you seeking, in vain in the wild, love?  
Throw me an arrow; I’m your wounded deer, love]

Sefidasti Napush Rakhtē Siyā Rā  
Be Jelvē Mikoshi Zālem To Mā Rā  
Be Jelvē Mikoshi Khundār Mishi  
Javān Astam Bebin Ruye Khodā Rā

[Your face is white, avoid wearing anything black.  
You're killing me by flashing that face.  
You become a blood bearer if you murder me.  
I’m young; look at me, for god’s sake]  
(Sho’ur, 1974: 69).

Marā Khban Ze Ghamhā Khaste Kardand  
Be Dāme Eshq Pāyam Baste Kardand  
Ze Ghelmin⁵ Shur-o Afghānsm Be Dar Shod  
Delam Rā Seyde Yek Goldaste Kardand

[The sweeties wounded me by sorrows  
They captivated me in their love trap  
My sighs and whines traveled beyond Ghelmin  
The sweeties hunted my heart with their bouquet-like faces]  
(Saqi, 2009: 40)

Agar Afsāne-am Kardi To kardi  
Ze Del Bigane-am Kardi To Kardi  
Javān-e Āqel-o Farzāne Budam  
Agar Divāne-am Kardi To kardi

[You did it if you shared the legend of my love.  
You did it if you made me a stranger to my heart.  
I used to be a wise and sensible guy.  
You did it if you drove me out of my mind]  
(Shahrani, 2016: 38)

Agar Āhi Kasham Panju⁶ Besuze  
Tagubargu Qlāye Naw⁷ Besuze  
Agar Āhi Kasham Az Suze Sina  
Bachey Sheytu Tahe Jamkhaw Besuze

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⁵ A location in Ghor, Afghanistan  
⁶ Punjab, a province in Afghanistan  
⁷ Both are places in Afghanistan
[If I sigh now, Panju will burn
So will Tagubarg and Qalay Naw.
If I sigh passionately
The naughty kid would ignite in his sleeping suit]
(Khavari, 2016:440)

Due to the fact that the poets of these folk couplets are ordinary people who are unfamiliar with prosodic meters, there are phonation disparities in several of these couplets. This form of poetry is often read while hearing music; hence, many of these prosody flaws are addressed when reading (Sho'ur, 1974: 75). Some of these couplets could well be adjusted to conform to the prosody standards. According to Dr. Vahidiyan Kamiyar, "...they recite couplets without prosody standards and totally following couplet meter, and if a long vowel violates the poem's rhythm, they pronounce it short and, depending on the context, prolong the short vowel" (1978: 21).

Mosāferi Ajab Delgir-o Zār As
Agar Shāzadeh Bashe Khār-o Zār As
Hazārān Tushak-o Qlāiche Bāshe
Be Zire Pāykayash Mānande Khār As

[Being a traveler is a sad and miserable life.
Even if the traveler is a royal, he is ignored and left to weep.
Even if hundreds of carpets are under his feet,
he is still treading on thorns].

Dar Khāna Rumāl Andākhta Maryam
Kajak Hrāe Bistu Char Andāhta Maryam
Berin Bā Mādar-e Maryam Boguin
Hama Re Az Kār Andākhte Maryam

[Maryam has removed her scarf while at home
She has loosened a strand of her locks.
Go and warn Maryam's mom:
She has diverted everyone's mind]
(Saqi, 2009: 97).

Pishe Khāna Biyā Shabtal Draw Ku
Do Sibe Sine Ra Dar Mah Graw Ku
Do Sibe Sine Ra Dar Mah Graw Ku
Biyā Yak Lāze Da Baghal Ma Khaw Ku

8 The locks of hair
9 She has loosened her hair
[Come and pick the clovers next to the house.
Come and pledge apple-shaped breasts to the Moon.
Come and pledge apple-shaped breasts to the Moon.
Come and lie in my arms for a while]
(Khavari)

2-1-4- Quatrain Meters:
Various Afghan Persian folk couplets, such as "Sangerdis" and often "Falaks," are composed in standard meters, particularly those relating to the Akhrab baseline. According to Dr. Sho'ur, the couplets of the central regions, including the "northern" part, adhere to the couplet prosody; nevertheless, "Falaks" and "Sangerdis" are formed using quatrain meters (1974: 43-46). Yet, our research indicates that Falaks not only adhere to the prosodic principles of quatrains but are also composed using the meters of folk couplets:

Alā Dokhtar Koja Hasti To Mehmān
Be Lewhāyat Zadi Sorkhi Farāvan
Sare Rāyat Neshinom Mesle Majnun
Mara Ay Āsheqi kardi Pashimān

[O, girl! Where are you a guest?
You’ve got lipstick on your lips.
I'll sit like Majnoon on your pathway.
You’ve made me regret being a lover]
(Shahrani, 1991: 517)

On the other hand, the examination of meters in "Northern" folk couplets reveals the presence of quatrain-based poems among them (Khorasani, 2019: 26):
The following is composed in a meter called Bahre Hazaj-e Mosaman-e Akhrab-e Abtar (Mafû’lo, Mafâi’lo, Mafâ’ilon Fa’)

Dandāne Sadaf Darune Dānat Bāsham
Har Gap Bezani Sar-e Zabānat Bāsham
Gar Khāb Shavi Be Jāye Khābat Bāsham
Bidār Shavi Ke Dar Kenārat Bāsham

[I wish to be one of those pearly teeth in your mouth
I wish to be on your tongue when you talk
I wish to be in your bed when you go to sleep
I wish to be by your side when you wake up]

Or consider the following Northern couplet, which is composed of a prosodic meter that is called Bahr-e Hazaj-e Mosaman-e Akhrab-e Mafkouf-e Majbub (Mafû’ulo Mafâi’lo, Mafâi’lo Fa’al):

Ruzi Ke Delam Pish-e Delat Bud Graw
Daman-e Mara Sakht Gerefti Ke Naraw  
Ruzi Ke Delat Jaye Degar Mayel Shod  
Gush-e Del-e Man Rast Nahadi Ke Boraw  

[As my heart was still a hostage of your heart  
You implored me, even begging me not to go  
But when your heart was drawn to others  
You murmured to my heart, "now go"]

The meters of the above couplets derive from the quatrain poetry and Akhrab's basis (Shams Qais Razi, 2009: 144). Although one of the characteristics of oral literature is its worldwide unifying factor, and determining the geographical origin of these poems is difficult, it is possible to argue that Falaks and Sangerdis more often replicate the prosody rules from other regions of Afghanistan's quatrains and folk couplets. Here are some examples of folk couplets composed in quatrain meters:

The following is a folk couplet composed in a prosodic meter called *Bahr-e Hazaj-e Akhrab-e Maqbus-e Abtar* (*Mafo’ulo, Mafāe’lon, Mafāi’lon Fa’*):

**Emshab Delakam Hawāye Delbar Dārad**  
**Morghe Delakam Hezār-o Yek Par Dārad**  
**Har Kas Ke Marā Be Pish-e Yāram Bebarad**  
**Guyā Ke Savab-e Haj-e Akbar Dārad**

[My heart yearns to see the beloved tonight.  
My heart's bird has hundreds of wings.  
One who sends the beloved to me  
Is like someone rewarded the Hajj-e Akbar]

The following is composed in a prosodic meter called *Bahr-e Hazaj-e Mosaman-e Makfouf-e Abtar* (*Mafo’ulo, Mafāi’lo, Mafāi’lon Fa’*):

**Abr Az Del-e Daryā-ye Kurasan Khizad**  
**Dor Az Lab-o Dandān-e Javanān Rizad**  
**Yazdan Begire Morgen-e Sahar Faryade**  
**Yār az Baghal-e Jure10 Be Nālān Khizad**

[The cloud is ascending from Daryāye Khorāsān.  
The pearl is dripping from the youth's lips and teeth.  
I wish God would silence the rooster's sing and sound  
It wakes the beloved up from the lover's arms by yelling]  
(Sho’ur, 1974: 98)

**Man Bolbol-o Shedāye To Tā Key Bāsham**  
**Dar Mehnat-o Sodaeye to Tā Key Bāsham**

10 The beloved or lover
Pisham Nayāi Ke Malāmat-e Khalqāni
Az Dur Tamāsha-ye To Tā Key Bāsham

[I'm like a bulbul who is madly in love with you. 
How long shall I suffer and obsess about you? 
You wouldn't come to me because others scolded you. 
How long should I stare at you from afar?]
(Nilab Rahimi, 1986: 87)

The following is a folk couplet composed in a prosodic meter called Bahr-e Hazaj-e Akhrab-e Maqbuz-e Majbub/ Ahtam (Mafo’ulo, Mafāe’lon, Fa’al/ Fa’ul)

Dar Kuh-e Boland Setize Kardan Che Alāj
Āsheq Shodim Ze Dur Didan Che Alāj
Āsheq Shodim Ze Dur Didan Sabr As
Sabrash Nakoni Be Gheyr-e Mordan Che Alāj

[What's the point of battling over a high mountain? 
What’s the point of falling in love from afar? 
Because of my patience, I see the love from afar. 
The only choice if I am not patient is to die]
(Shou’r, 1974: 76)

The following folk couplet is composed in a prosodic meter called Bahr-e Hazaj-e Mosaman-e Akhrab-e Maqbuz-e Abtar (Mafo’ulo, Mafāe’lon, Mafāi’lon, Fā’):

Tā Az To Jodā Shodam Nadāram Hāli
Ān Kist Ke Āvarad Be Man Ahvāli
Ahvāl-e Torā Kabutarān Miārand
Ku Kaftar-e Maleqi-ye Zibā Bāli

[I'm not in a good mood since I broke up with you. 
Who is the volunteer who delivers your news to me? 
I get your news from the pigeon. 
Where is the pigeon post with its gorgeous wings?] 
(Nilab Rahimi, 1986: 25)

5- Syllabic Meters

Short Folk Couplets (Midah Do-bayti) in Afghan Persian are popular among ordinary people. These poems are composed in syllabic meters. This sort of folk couplet relates to the same couplets that Tabari's History narrated from Balkh children and are among the early works of Dari Persian poems:

Az Khotalān Āmaziya
Baru Tabāh Āmaziya
Āvāre Bāz Āmaziya
Khoshk-o Nazār Āmaziya

[He's just arrived from Khotalān.
He's coming upset.
The homeless man is returning.
The lover is returning.]

Short couplets have been popular among people from the beginning of the Dari Persian language in their original form and with the same syllabic rhythms. Short couplets are often four half-verses with seven syllables, like in Balkh’s folk song (according to the above narration). These couplets are more frequent in northern Afghanistan and among children and adults. Children recite these songs during games, and adults chant them together with music (Sho’ur, 1974: 389-392).
The following is an example of such couplets composed for children:

*Raftam Be Bāgh-e Peste*
*Didam Shoghāl Neshasteh*
*Yak Sang Zadam Da Gushesh*
*Didam Gushesh Shekaste*

[I walked to the pistachio farm
I saw jackal was sitting there
I smacked its ear with a rock
I saw its ear got hurt]
(Shou’r, 1974: 391)

Folk couplets, according to some scholars, are the continuance of the same syllabic poetry that have developed into prosody through time (Zulfaqari, 2016: 70). Although folk couplets are an advanced version of these syllabic poems, they remain popular in Afghanistan and are frequent among children and adults in their original form. The employment of rhyme in contemporary couplets is the only alteration to this traditional pattern.

**Seven Syllabic Folk Couplets**
*Az Bālā Aw Miyāye*
*Buše-e Palaw Miyāye*
*Khāna Re Jāru Koni*
Ārūs-e Nāw Miyāye

[Rain is falling from the sky.
The aroma of a meal from above
Now is the time to sweep the home.
The new bride is on her way]  
(Shou’r, 1974: 390)

Āmadim Az Rāye Shīna
Āzān Dāda Pishina
In Kortay-e Siyāyet
Be Jānakat Mishina

[We came through the Shina route.
The prayer hour has already commenced.
This black outfit you're wearing
Flatters your lovely figure]
(Shahrani, 2016: 19)

Az Bālā Bārān Āmad
Yāram Be Dālān Āmad
Khāstam Yak Māch Begiram
Cheshmash De Geryān Āmad

[The rain rained from the sky.
My beloved walked to the hallway.
I begged her to give me a kiss
She broke into tears quickly]
(Sho’ur, 1974: 391)

Chashm-e Siyāye Zāghat
Mādar Nabine Dāghat
Mādar Bine Nabine
Āshoq Nabine Dāghat
[You got crown-like black eyes.
I hope your mom never weeps for you.
Whether she weeps or not
The lover is the one who should see your mourning.]
(Shahrani, 2016: 26)

Sometimes the short folk couplets use six syllabic meters. For instance:

Az Dur Didam Torā
Por Nur Didam Torā
Ātash-e Jānam Shodi
Ākhar Migirm Torā

[I saw you from afar
Glowing such a glowing
You've lit a fire in my heart
And one day I'll marry you.]
(Sho’ur, 1974: 395)

Some folk couplets can be recited as ten-syllabic or twelve-syllabic:
6- Conclusion

Afghan folk couplets typically include two sorts of meters: prosodic meters (couplet meters and quatrain meters) and syllabic meters. Most of them are composed in couplet meters, while others are composed in Akhrab quatrain meters. Sangardis and Falaks are generally recited based on quatrain meters. However, quatrain meters are not limited to these two, and couplets with the same meter could be found in poetry from different locations. The second form of the couplet is one with syllabic prosody. These are the same syllabic couplets as in "Balkh kids' folk song," that is, the couplets that have survived among our people from the beginning to the present in the same form as the first and are known as short couplets (Midah Do-bayti). Because the couplet composers are common people unfamiliar with the norms of prosody, several of these brief couplets have prosody flaws. Of course, these prosodic flaws can be remedied with a little modification. Lengthening short vowels (e and o) in Afghan Persian turns the coordinating conjunction and Ezafe marker to close-mid back rounded vowel and close-mid front unrounded vowel, and specific prosody inadequacies (known as the poetic license in other dialects of the Persian language) can be eliminated in this way.

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11 Together
12 Look, See
References


Khorasani, Shafiqullah. "Afghanistan Persian Folk Couplets: Northern Region". Master's thesis. Faculty of Literature and Human Sciences, University of Tehran.


