

GENRE HYBRIDIZATION AND DRAMATIC CONFLICT IN N. TORESHOVA'S *YALGANSHI*: THE EMERGENCE OF THE DASTAN-DRAMA IN KARAKALPAK LITERATURE

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Abstract

This study analyzes the genre-stylistic innovation represented by Nasiyba Toreshova's *Yalganshi* (The Deceiver), a work that introduced the hybrid genre of the *dastan-drama* into contemporary Karakalpak lyro-epic poetry. Positioned at the intersection of traditional oral epic narrative (*dastan*) and theatrical stage performance (*drama*), the work utilizes dialogue, polylogue, authorial commentary, and tri-temporal historical perspectives to address moral corruption, artistic freedom, and spiritual integrity. Focusing on the central conflict between the idealist poet Ahmed, his pious wife Aliyma, and corrupt literary bureaucrats, this paper examines how Toreshova synthesized folkloric motifs—including divine visions (*ayan*), hyperbolic characterizations, and Islamic ethical doctrines—with modern social realism. The analysis demonstrates that the *dastan-drama* structure provides a highly effective artistic mechanism for processing complex socio-political transitions in post-independence Central Asian literature.

Keywords: Karakalpak literature, Nasiyba Toreshova, *Yalganshi*, *dastan-drama*, genre hybridization, dramatic conflict, Islamic symbolism, post-independence poetry.

Introduction

In post-independence Karakalpak poetry, the revival of traditional lyro-epic forms was accompanied by intense genre experimentation. Writers sought new artistic structures capable of reflecting the rapidly changing socio-political landscape, synthesizing traditional national folklore with modern psychological realism and theatrical techniques. Among these structural innovations, Nasiyba Toreshova's *Yalganshi* (The Deceiver), published in her 2009 collection *Aziyzim*, holds a unique position as the founding work of the *dastan-drama* genre in Karakalpak literature (Toreshova, 2009).

While traditional written *dastans* relied primarily on authorial narrative or lyrical monologues, *Yalganshi* merges the epic breadth and symbolic-metaphorical language of narrative poetry with the dynamic conflict, character dialogues, and stage direction typical of dramatic theatre. This paper examines the compositional architecture, thematic conflict, and poetic devices employed in *Yalganshi*, evaluating how Toreshova utilized genre hybridization to explore ethical struggles, institutional corruption, and spiritual faith during the transition from Soviet rule to National Independence.

Socio-Political Conflict and Structural Architecture across Three Eras

The central plot of *Yalganshi* is drawn from the socio-cultural milieu of creative intellectuals, following the life and trials of a young poet named Ahmed. The narrative encompasses three distinct historical periods: the late Soviet era, the period of *Glasnost* (perestroika), and the early

years of National Independence. Through this tri-temporal framework, Toreshova illustrates how systemic corruption and human compromise persisted across changing political regimes. The central dramatic conflict arises when Ahmed wins first place in a prestigious literary competition. Corrupt literary bureaucrats—specifically the senior writer Sherbek and the publishing official Muptilla—conspire with the third secretary of the regional party committee (*obkom*) to strip Ahmed of his award, reassigning him to second place. When Ahmed demands justice, he faces severe institutional retaliation: his upcoming book manuscript is dismantled at the printing house under the pretext of "political errors," forcing him to resign from his job in disgrace.

The conflict reaches its climax when the antagonists hire thugs to beat Ahmed nearly to death. The dramatic tension is sustained through dynamic dialogues, dramatic pauses, and direct confrontations between Ahmed's combative desire for immediate justice and his wife Aliyma's deep-seated Islamic faith, which emphasizes patience (*sabir*), divine justice, and non-violence.

Folkloric Motifs and Divine Intervention: The Role of *Ayan* (Vision)

Despite its realist portrayal of literary rivalries, *Yalganshi* draws heavily upon traditional epic folklore. A key compositional device in the work is the motif of *ayan* (divine vision or epiphany), a typological feature deeply rooted in Karakalpak oral *dastans* (Bayniyazov, 1999; Dawqaraev, 1977).

In *Yalganshi*, when Ahmed lies critically injured in the hospital, his wife Aliyma receives a series of mystical visions during prayer. In her vision, an unseen spiritual voice (*saza*) addresses her directly:

VOICE (SAZA):

Aliyma, be patient!

Aliyma, be patient! Hold on for a single breath!

Do not hurry, everything will be yours!

ALIYMA (Awakening):

Thank you, my Allah, for the vision Thou hast given!

I am Thy servant, and I shall fulfill Thy command!

'There is no passing beyond fate,' and the path of destiny

I shall walk with patience and endurance. (Toreshova, 2009, p. 110)

Later, Ahmed himself experiences a majestic vision of the Divine Presence during his hospital recovery, witnessing a grand figure seated in white robes upon white clouds. This epiphany restores Ahmed's spirit, leading him toward religious repentance (*tawbe*) and emotional healing.

Furthermore, the resolution of the dramatic conflict relies on the Islamic concept of divine retribution (*qisas*). The principal aggressor, Bekqul, dies unexpectedly during a drunken winter blizzard—an event interpreted by the characters not as accidental death, but as cosmic justice returning evil to its originator.

The Authorial Narrator as the Modern Equivalent of the *Jiraw*

In traditional Karakalpak oral epics, the *jiraw* (epic bard) served as the central narrator, commentator, and moral compass of the performance, guiding the audience through complex heroic events (Bayniyazov, 1999; Sagitov, 1974). In Toreshova's dastan-drama, this structural function is assumed by the Authorial Narrator.

Toreshova uses high-keyed hyperbolic imagery to define the spiritual essence of poetic creation:

Poets are the crown and throne of the world,

The Messenger sent by God to His servants.

Poets are the light cast into the heart,

The beautiful smile of this beautiful world...

Though the poet dies, poetry shall not die,

Songs do not die, wisdom does not die! (Toreshova, 2009, pp. 68–69)

Through these authorial interludes, Toreshova elevates a localized literary dispute into a universal reflection on the eternal struggle between spiritual truth (*hadalliq*) and systemic falsehood (*yalganshi*).

Poetic Comparison: Traditional Dastan vs. Dastan-Drama

The hybrid structure of *Yalganshi* exhibits clear stylistic differences when compared to traditional narrative forms:

Structural Aspect	Traditional Folkloric / Written Dastan	Toreshova's Dastan-Drama (Yalganshi)
Primary Text Format	Continuous narrative verse (monologic).	Dialogue, polylogue, stage directions, and verse.
Spatial-Temporal Axis	Mythic or linear historical past.	Tri-temporal modern setting (Soviet, Glasnost, Independence).
Conflict Mechanism	External heroic battle against foreign foes.	Internal moral, institutional, and spiritual struggle.
Role of the Divine	Epic miracles aiding the hero in battle.	Internal epiphanies (<i>ayan</i>) guiding personal ethics.
Narrative Voice	Single third-person narrator or bard.	Interlocking character voices moderated by Authorial Commentary.

Conclusion

Nasiyba Toreshova's *Yalganshi* represents a significant genre innovation in post-independence Karakalpak literature. By fusing the emotional depth and symbolic richness of the *dastan* with the dynamic conflict and structural pacing of theatrical drama, Toreshova established the *dastan-drama* as a viable medium for addressing modern social and ethical dilemmas.

The work's enduring value lies in its integration of traditional folkloric mechanisms—such as divine visions (*ayan*), hyperbolic characterizations, and moral retribution—into a contemporary narrative centered on artistic freedom and spiritual integrity. Through *Yalganshi*, Toreshova demonstrated that Karakalpak lyro-epic poetry could evolve beyond historical recitation, utilizing hybrid forms to confront the moral complexities of modern society.

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