

THE MECHANISM BY WHICH HISTORICAL TRUTH IS TRANSFORMED INTO
ARTISTIC REALITY: THE CASE OF INTERTEXTUAL RELATIONS

(Based on Xayriddin Sulton's novel "Yaldo kechasi")

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ABSTRACT:

ARTICLE INFO:

Received: 04.10.2026

Revised: 05.10.2026

Accepted: 06.10.2026

KEY WORDS:

*historical novel,
artistic reality,
intertextual relations,
intertextuality, literary
mystification, epigraph,
national memory,
Xayriddin Sulton,
"Yaldo kechasi".*

This article analyses the mechanism by which historical truth is transformed into artistic reality, using Xayriddin Sulton's novel "Yaldo kechasi" as an example, from the standpoint of the theory of intertextuality. The relevance of the study is connected with the need to systematise scholarly the works that mark a new stage of historical prose in contemporary Uzbek philology. The article analyses the ideological, artistic and stylistic relationship of the novel's text with Abdulla Qodiriy's "O'tkan kunlar", the ways in which documentary sources are absorbed into artistic fiction, and the role of the epigraph and the symbolic title in the structure of the text. The results of the study show that the artistic rendering of historical reality can be interpreted as a three-stage process – the selection of a fact, its artistic transformation and its generalisation through intertextual dialogue.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, recourse to historical themes in Uzbek prose has intensified, and works oriented towards a new artistic and philosophical comprehension of the national past are being created. A striking example of such a process is Xayriddin Sulton's novel "Yaldo kechasi". In this work, which the author created on the basis of historical documents, the fate of the nation in the period of Tsarist and Soviet colonial rule is portrayed through three generations – grandfather,

father and child. The work was presented in Tashkent at the end of December 2025 and was highly appreciated by the literary community; in particular, Ibrohim G'afurov, the responsible editor and Hero of Uzbekistan, described it as a genuine discovery in contemporary Uzbek literature, and Academician Shuhrat Sirojiddinov as a high-quality work distinguished by its national spirit in the hundred years of history since the novel "O'tkan kunlar" [4].

The relevance of this study is determined by two aspects. First, in contemporary literary studies the question of providing a theoretical foundation for the complex relationship between historical truth and artistic truth still remains open. Second, the novel "Yaldo kechasi" needs separate scholarly analysis in terms of its genre features, compositional structure and relation to Abdulla Qodiriy's traditions. As noted at the presentation of the novel, the work logically and artistically continues the path of historical and national thought begun in Qodiriy's novel "O'tkan kunlar"; this circumstance calls for deep research on the basis of the theory of intertextuality.

The aim of the study is to reveal, using the novel "Yaldo kechasi" as an example, the mechanism by which historical truth is transformed into artistic reality from the standpoint of intertextual relations. To achieve this aim, the following tasks were set: 1) to describe theoretically the process of the artistic rendering of fact in the historical novel genre; 2) to identify and classify the intertextual elements in the novel connected with Qodiriy's text; 3) to elucidate the function of intertextual relations at the levels of epigraph, title and plot; 4) to determine the place of the concept of "literary mystification" in the poetics of the novel [7].

As for the degree to which the topic has been studied, while the theoretical foundations of the theory of intertextuality were developed in the studies of M. Bakhtin, J. Kristeva and G. Genette, in Uzbek literary studies the problems of the poetics of the historical novel have been covered from various aspects in the works of scholars such as O. Sharafiddinov, N. Jabborov and I. G'afurov. However, the novel "Yaldo kechasi", as a new work, does not yet have a comprehensive monographic study, especially from the standpoint of intertextual relations, which determines the scholarly novelty of this article.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The main material of the study is Xayriddin Sulton's novel "Yaldo kechasi", and Abdulla Qodiriy's novel "O'tkan kunlar" serves as the object of comparison. In addition, scholarly and critical articles about the novel, presentation materials and the opinions of the literary community were drawn into the analysis.

The following methods were used in the study: the intertextual analysis method – to identify the ideological and artistic connections between the two novels; the comparative-typological method – to determine the commonalities and differences in the poetics of the two works; structural-semantic analysis – to reveal the function of the title and the epigraph in the structure of the text; and the historical-genetic method – to examine the relation of artistic fiction to its



documentary basis. The complex application of the methods served to ensure the objectivity of the research results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Artistic transformation of the historical fact: theoretical basis

The distinctive feature of the historical novel genre is that in it the author must maintain a balance between documentary truth and artistic fiction. The novel “Yaldo kechasi” is noteworthy precisely from this standpoint: it is described as artistic fiction created on the basis of historical documents, that is, by artistically reworking archival documents, testimonies of the period and information on the fates of historical figures, the writer creates a new – aesthetic – reality. This process can conventionally be divided into three stages: (a) selection of the fact – from among many historical data the writer sorts out those that serve the artistic idea; (b) transformation of the fact – the selected material is artistically shaped by means of character, plot and composition; (c) generalisation – through individual facts a holistic artistic image of the nation’s fate is created [1].

Each of these three stages is clearly observable in the novel. In particular, through the image of Yodgorbek the author reveals with psychological depth the complex socio-political processes of the last century, the trials that befell the nation and the influence of the colonial period on the people’s psyche. In this, a nationwide tragedy is artistically rendered through an individual fate – which is a model example of the mechanism by which historical truth is transformed into artistic reality.

2. Intertextual relation with “O‘tkan kunlar”: continuity and renewal

The most important intertextual layer in the novel “Yaldo kechasi” is its connection with Abdulla Qodiriy’s work “O‘tkan kunlar”. This relationship manifests itself at several levels. The first level is ideological and thematic continuity: both works depict the fate of the nation at turning points of history and advance the idea of preserving national identity. The second level is stylistic closeness: the author consciously approaches Qodiriy’s style creatively, which has been assessed by literary scholars as “literary mystification” – that is, a method of creating in the reader an effect of “trust” in the historical period by restoring the language, tone and narrative style of a past era. The third level is compositional parallelism: in both novels the history of the nation is embodied through the fates of families and generations.

From the standpoint of the theory of intertextuality, such a relationship can be explained through G. Genette’s concept of “hypertextuality”: “Yaldo kechasi” reworks the text of “O‘tkan kunlar” (the hypotext) through a distinctive artistic transformation and appears as a new text – a hypertext. The important point here is that the link is not imitation but has the character of a creative dialogue: while continuing Qodiriy’s tradition, Sulton reinterprets it in line with his own time and his own artistic intention [10].

3. Epigraph and title: symbolic intertextual elements



The title and epigraph of the novel have a distinct intertextual function. The expression “Yaldo kechasi” denotes the longest night of the year – the night of 21–22 December, and through this astronomical-folkloric image the “dark period” the nation has lived through is symbolically expressed. In this way the title becomes an independent symbolic text, a paratextual element that points to the content of the work.

As the epigraph of the novel, the ancient lines of the poet Muhammad Sharif Gulxaniy about nocturnal darkness and despair are cited. Such a choice of epigraph creates a direct intertextual bridge between classical literature and the modern text and directs the reader to perceive the content of the work more deeply – not only on a historical but also on a universal and philosophical scale. In this way a diachronic dialogue arises between classical and modern texts through the epigraph, which is a direct practical confirmation of the principle in Kristeva’s theory of intertextuality that “any text is built as a mosaic of previous texts”.

4. The three-generation structure and the mechanism of historical memory

A distinctive feature of the novel’s composition lies in showing the continuity of the historical process through the fates of three generations – grandfather, father and child. This structure goes back, on the one hand, to the tradition of the family chronicle (including the Qodiriy tradition); on the other hand, it artistically models the mechanism by which historical memory is passed from generation to generation. As each generation lives through the historical trials of its own time, through them a holistic, multilayered picture of the nation’s fate is created.

From this standpoint the novel not only restores the past but also performs the task of conveying historical memory to the consciousness of today’s generation. This is the final, social-functional stage of the transformation of historical truth into artistic reality, in which the artistic text acquires not only aesthetic but also educational and enlightening significance.

5. A generalised model of the mechanism

On the basis of the above analysis, the mechanism by which historical truth is transformed into artistic reality can be expressed in the following model: documentary source → artistic selection → figurative transformation (character, plot, composition) → intertextual activation (dialogue with earlier texts through the epigraph, title and stylistic closeness) → nationwide and philosophical generalisation. The novel “Yaldo kechasi” consistently manifests all stages of this model, which makes it possible to assess it as a methodologically exemplary work in contemporary Uzbek historical prose.

CONCLUSION

The research conducted shows that in Xayriddin Sulton’s novel “Yaldo kechasi” the transformation of historical truth into artistic reality is a complex, multistage process closely tied to intertextual relations. The novel is organically connected with Abdulla Qodiriy’s “O‘tkan kunlar” at the ideological, stylistic and compositional levels, and this connection is not simple



imitation but has the character of creative continuity and renewal. Through paratextual elements such as the epigraph and the title a deep dialogue arises between classical and modern texts, while the three-generation structure ensures the artistic modelling of historical memory.

The five-stage model developed as a result of the research (documentary source – selection – transformation – intertextual activation – generalisation) can be applied, as a theoretical and methodological basis for analysing contemporary Uzbek historical novel-writing, to the analysis of other works as well. In future research, a comparative analysis of the novel “Yaldo kechasi” with other examples of national and world historical prose, as well as a deeper study of the novel’s linguopoetic and stylistic features, remains an urgent direction.

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