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THE PROBLEMS OF WORLD POLITICS AND THE FATE OF THE NATION THROUGH THE PRISM OF INTERTEXTUALITY: AN ANALYSIS OF THE NOVEL "YALDO KECHASI"

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Abstract. The article analyses the artistic interpretation of the problems of world politics and the fate of the nation by means of intertextuality in Xayriddin Sulton's novel "Yaldo kechasi" (2025). The study examines the novel's hypertextual relation to Abdulla Qodiriy's "O'tkan kunlar", literary mystification (the found manuscript and the author's mask), and the absorption of historical documents, letters and poetic texts into the body of the work, as well as allusions and reminiscences, as the main means of artistically comprehending the geopolitical processes of the colonial period. Descriptive, comparative-historical and intertextual methods of analysis were used. It is substantiated that intertextuality is the leading way of turning historical truth into artistic truth.

Key words: intertextuality, hypertextuality, literary mystification, historical novel, "Yaldo kechasi", "O'tkan kunlar", Xayriddin Sulton, fate of the nation, historical memory.

INTRODUCTION

In contemporary literary studies, the literary text is studied not as a solitary and self-sufficient whole but as a complex cultural phenomenon that is in constant dialogue with earlier texts. This question acquires particular importance in the historical novel genre, since the historical novel, by its very nature, recreates the reality of the past through documents, memory, narrative and earlier artistic interpretations. Xayriddin Sulton's novel "Yaldo kechasi", published in 2025, is noteworthy in this respect. The sources record that the work was presented on 21 December 2025, that is, on the day on which, according to the calendar, the longest night of the year – the Yaldo night – begins, at the "Shahidlar xotirasi" ("Memory of the Martyrs") memorial complex in Tashkent, and that the novel was presented as artistic fiction created on the basis of historical documents. In addition, the fact that the work appeared on the eve of the centenary of the creation of "O'tkan kunlar", which is regarded as the cornerstone of Uzbek novel-writing, gives it additional symbolic meaning.

The aim of this article is to determine by what artistic means broad-scale problems such as world politics and the fate of the nation are interpreted in the novel, and what place intertextuality occupies in this. The tasks of the study include reviewing the main principles of the theory of intertextuality, elucidating the novel's hypertextual link with "O'tkan kunlar", analysing the strategy of literary mystification, and determining the artistic function of documents, letters and poetic texts.

METHODS

The study used descriptive, comparative-historical and intertextual methods of analysis.

1. The theory of intertextuality and its methodological foundations

The term "intertextuality" was introduced into scholarly usage by the French researcher Julia Kristeva, who developed the concept relying on Mikhail Bakhtin's ideas about dialogism and polyphony. In Kristeva's view, any text is built as a mosaic of quotations, and it absorbs other texts and transforms them. Bakhtin himself stressed that the word is never neutral and retains the trace of its earlier uses. Roland Barthes, in his concept of "the death of the author", assessed the

text as a fabric woven from countless cultural sources and called into question the sole authority of the author. Gérard Genette's classification of transtextuality holds a special place in systematising the theory of intertextuality. He distinguishes five types of relations between texts – intertextuality, paratextuality, metatextuality, architextuality and hypertextuality. According to Genette, hypertextuality is the connection of a later text (the hypertext) with an earlier text (the hypotext) not by commenting on it but by transforming or imitating it.

In Uzbek literary studies, the issue of intertextuality began to be studied theoretically and practically in recent decades. In educational and scholarly literature on literary theory, including the works of D. Quronov, intertextual relations, allusions and references are considered as a factor that broadens the layers of meaning of a literary text. These theoretical foundations serve as an important methodological support in analysing "Yaldo kechasi", since the poetic structure of the novel is built on the basis of intertextual relations.

RESULTS

2. From "O'tkan kunlar" to "Yaldo kechasi": the hypertextual link

The first and main factor determining the intertextual nature of the novel is its hypertextual relation to Abdulla Qodiriy's novel "O'tkan kunlar". The sources emphasise that during his many years of creative activity Xayriddin Sulton regarded Abdulla Qodiriy as a spiritual mentor, and that "Yaldo kechasi" was assessed as a new step along this path. At the presentation held on 17 January 2026 at the Tashkent State University of Uzbek Language and Literature, the novel was assessed as a logical continuation of the path of historical and national thought begun by Qodiriy in "O'tkan kunlar", and it was noted that, through the example of the fates of three generations, the tragedy of the nation in the period of Tsarist and Soviet colonial rule and the struggle for freedom and enlightenment are revealed. In the study devoted to intertextuality, too, the work's hypertextual relation to "O'tkan kunlar", stylistic imitation, allusions and reminiscences are shown as the leading poetic features of the novel.

From the standpoint of Genette's theory, "O'tkan kunlar" serves as the hypotext and "Yaldo kechasi" as the hypertext. However, this relation is not simple imitation. In his novel Qodiriy depicted the fate of the individual and the nation against the background of internal conflicts, the struggle for power and social fragmentation in the period of the Kokand Khanate. Sulton, continuing this tradition, shifts the historical viewpoint to the following period, that is, to the era of colonialism and the Soviet system. As a result, a hundred-year historical and artistic bridge arises between the two works: while the first novel showed the internal causes of the calamities that befell the nation, the second seeks to comprehend artistically the external consequences of those calamities, that is, those connected with world politics. In this way intertextuality appears as a poetic mechanism ensuring the historical continuity of Uzbek prose.

3. Literary mystification: the found manuscript and the author's mask

Literary mystification holds a special place in the intertextual strategy of the novel. This method is based on presenting the work as a genuine historical document or a found manuscript and, by concealing or replacing the identity of the author, arousing in the reader an impression of the authenticity of the text. Studies have shown that in "Yaldo kechasi" the strategy of the found manuscript and false authorship is used. Ibrohim G'afurov, too, stressed at the presentation that the work was written on the basis of a creative approach to Qodiriy's style and that a completely new artistic phenomenon emerged through literary mystification.

The scholarly significance of mystification is that it manifests in artistic practice the idea of the weakening of the author's authority advanced by Barthes. When a conventional writer takes the place of the real author, the text appears not as a personal opinion but as if history itself were speaking. This is especially convenient in depicting a political theme. If we imagine the conditions of the Soviet period, when the possibility of speaking the truth openly was limited, the form of the "found manuscript" turns the very problem of historical silence and censorship into a poetic image.

The truth that emerges from between the pages of the manuscript reaches the reader as a memory kept hidden, and this memory raises reflection on the fate of the nation to the level of personal experience.

4. Documents, letters and poetic texts: turning historical truth into artistic truth

Studies show that the second important intertextual layer of "Yaldo kechasi" is the incorporation of historical documents, letters and poetic texts into the fabric of the novel. The fact that the author himself called the work artistic fiction based on historical documents also confirms the conceptual significance of this layer. According to Genette's classification, such a case is intertextuality in the narrow sense, that is, the direct presence of a fragment of one text in another. The document expresses official political language, the letter personal feeling and the poetic text the national psyche. Their meeting within a single work gives rise to a dialogue of different voices, which is a distinctive manifestation of polyphony in Bakhtin's sense.

Here two layers of speech collide: the language of the official document, expressing the logic of empire and state, and the language of letters and poetry, expressing the logic of the individual and the people. However dry and "objective" an official document may be, it preserves the trace of the real power relations behind political decisions. Letters and poems, in turn, show the aftermath that these decisions left in the heart of the ordinary person. The parallel presentation of these two layers in the structure of the novel brings to life in the reader's mind the connection between great politics and the fate of the small human being. In this sense intertextuality is the leading means of turning historical truth into artistic truth, harmonising the reliability of the document with the impact of the artistic image. This situation has also been covered in other studies devoted to "Yaldo kechasi" as ways of turning historical truth into artistic interpretation.

DISCUSSION

5. Intertextual interpretation of the problem of world politics and the fate of the nation

The treatment of the theme of world politics in the novel cannot be understood apart from its historical context. The sources emphasise that the historical background of the work is formed by the period of Tsarist and Soviet colonial rule. This period passed for Turkestan under the direct influence of world politics: in the second half of the nineteenth century the geopolitical rivalry between the Russian and British empires, known in historiography as the "Great Game", determined the political map of Central Asia, and the capture of Tashkent in 1865 and the abolition of the Kokand Khanate in 1876 put an end to the independence of the region. Later, the events of 1917, the crushing of the Turkestan Autonomy in early 1918 and the repressions of 1937–1938 tragically determined the fate of the nation's intellectuals. The shooting of Abdulla Qodiriy in 1938 is one of the most symbolic points of this tragedy. For this reason the connection of "Yaldo kechasi" with Qodiriy's legacy is not merely a stylistic choice but means bringing historical fate itself into the artistic text.

Presenting such historical processes not by way of direct political commentary but through intertextual means gives the author several possibilities. First, the hypertextual relation to "O'tkan kunlar" activates national images, values and historical experience already present in the reader's memory, and great political events are comprehended through their effect on the national psyche. Second, the depiction of the fates of three generations makes it possible to show the different effect of world politics on each generation. In this regard it is noted in the presentation that through the images of three generations the author embodied, through the fates of credible characters, the historical trials that the people and the Motherland have lived through. Third, in studies the image of Yodgorbek is interpreted as a central image that reveals the complex socio-political processes of the last century, the influence of the colonial period on the people's psyche and the issue of loyalty to the legacy of ancestors. Thus, world politics appears in the novel not as an abstract geopolitical scheme but as a historical force passing through the inner world of one family, one generation and one person.

6. The intertextual and symbolic content of the metaphor "Yaldo kechasi"

The title of the work also performs an intertextual function as a paratextual sign. Yaldo denotes the longest and darkest night of the year and in folk culture is regarded as a symbol of longing for light and of passing through trial. In studies this metaphor is interpreted in connection with the idea of the long ordeal and darkness that befell the nation and the belief that dawn will break after it. The fact that the work was presented precisely on the day coinciding with the longest night of the year also strengthened the link between the text and its cultural context. In addition, the role of folklore elements, the people's customs and rituals and examples of oral creativity in expressing national identity has also been studied in the novel, which shows that the work is also in intertextual connection with folklore sources.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study showed that in the novel "Yaldo kechasi" the artistic interpretation of the problems of world politics and the fate of the nation is carried out by means of intertextuality. First, the novel's hypertextual relation to "O'tkan kunlar" ensures a hundred-year continuity of historical and national thought in Uzbek prose and activates the national images in the reader's memory. Second, literary mystification, that is, the strategy of the found manuscript and the author's mask, presents historical truth as hidden memory and makes the political theme artistically convincing. Third, the harmonisation of the historical document, letter and poetic text in a single fabric manifests the connection between great politics and human fate in a polyphonic way. Fourth, the title metaphor and folklore elements enrich the symbolic and cultural layers of the work. Thus, in "Yaldo kechasi" intertextuality is not merely a stylistic ornament but the main poetic mechanism that makes it possible to comprehend the consequences of world politics through the fate of the nation. In future research, a comparative study of the novel's documentary layer with archival sources, as well as identifying its intertextual relations with the legacy of Jadid writers such as Cho'lpon and Fitrat, may be a promising direction.

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