



Article

The Role of Folk Epics As Cultural Codes and Intertextual Bases in Uzbek Literary Texts

Homidova Mahfuzakhon Farhodjon qizi

1. Doctoral student at Alisher Navoiy Tashkent State University of Uzbek Language and Literature

* Correspondence: -

Abstract: Intertextuality is one of the basic principles of text analysis and is found in all types of text. In particular, in literary texts there are excerpts from other texts: quotations, allusive names, parodies. The main sources of intertextuality in literary texts are verses from the Qur'an, hadiths, examples of folklore, and quotations from famous works. The same is true of Uzbek literary texts. This article discusses the occurrence of intertextuals of Uzbek folk epics in literary texts, their peculiarities. Uzbek folk epics such as "Alpomish", "Gorogli" are very popular among the people, and their names and names of heroes are well known. Therefore, they are widely used by poets and writers as an intertextual source in both prose and poetry.

Keywords: intertextuality, allusion, literary text, cultural cod, folklore, epic, Alpomish, Gorogli.

1. Introduction

The main elements, linguistic units that make up the principle of intertextuality in the text are intertexts. In the process of analyzing the literature on the theory of intertextuality, it can be seen that other text fragments, proverbs, epigraphs, quotations included in the text are evaluated as intertext [1].

Intertextuality serves as a fundamental principle in text analysis, where "intertexts" act as the primary linguistic units. According to Julia Kristeva, "any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another" [2]. In Uzbek literature, this phenomenon is deeply rooted in national oral traditions, sacred texts, and classical poetry. While previous research has categorized intertextual forms like proverbs and epigraphs, the specific role of folk epics (dastons) as cultural codes remains a significant area for linguocultural exploration. This article aims to analyze how characters and motifs from epics like "Alpomish" function as intertextual sources that activate the collective linguistic memory of the Uzbek people [3].

2. Materials and Method

It is known that sacred books and hadis, examples of folklore, excerpts from the works of another writer are widely used as intertexts in the literary text. Intertexts, in turn, have national-cultural characteristics. Because the author of the literary text uses a fragment of a work popular in the nation as an intertext, or national literature, folk oral creativity based on the national characteristics of the people. For this reason, the reader immediately understands the intertext given in the text and begins to understand what the text is about. Because the text given as an intertext has already taken place in his linguistic memory. This feature allows studying the phenomenon of intertextuality from the linguocultural point of view. Also, precedent units, which are part of the phenomenon of intertextuality, are one of the main objects of linguoculturology. Excerpts from popular poems and songs

Citation: Farhodjon qizi, H. M. The Role of Folk Epics As Cultural Codes and Intertextual Bases in Uzbek Literary Texts. Central Asian Journal of Literature, Philosophy, and Culture 2026, 7(3), 126-131

Received: 10th Feb 2026
Revised: 21st Mar 2026
Accepted: 18th Apr 2026
Published: 15th May 2026



Copyright: © 2026 by the authors. Submitted for open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)

in the Uzbek language, the Quran and hadis', narratives and movies can also be evaluated as intertext. In this case, with the help of a given text fragment, the same text itself comes to mind, and this fragment, which is familiar to many people, will also have the feature of recovery, with intertext, the content of the text can be further defined, and its meaning can be understood more deeply.

It is known that Eastern literature, especially Uzbek literary text, has always been dominated by a didactic spirit. In order to give this didactic spirit, before, i.e., before Islam, the use of proverbs and proverbs in literary texts was widespread, but after the introduction of the religion of Islam, the tradition of incorporating parts of the Quran and examples of hadis' into the literary text grew. We can observe that this method was used in Gulkhani's "Zarbulmasal" and Nasiruddin Rabguzi's "Kissasi Rabguzi". That is why, in the Eastern, especially in Uzbek literature, fragments of the Quran, hadis, examples of folklore: proverbs, legends and narratives are actively used as intertexts. In Uzbek literary texts, intertextual units such as Alpomish, Hizr, Majnun, Farhad, Jalaliddin are actively used in poetic and prose texts, and these lexical units, i.e. symbols, refer to the content of a whole text related to them.

We tried to classify the intertexts found in Uzbek literary texts in terms of form as follows: allusion, reminiscence, epigraph, title, quotation (quote), parody. As an intertext, these forms are actively found in Uzbek literary texts, and they embody all the features of intertextuality.

Intertexts found in poetic or prose texts are chosen by the author to fulfill a specific task.

For example: Usman Azim's poem "Alpomish xususida shoir do'stinga maxfiy xat" ("Secret letter to my poet friend about Alpomish") begins with the following lines:

Arpali cho'lida Alpomish uxlar.

Uni uyg'otmayman

(Alpomish sleeps in the Arpali desert.

I won't wake him up).

These lines can easily be presented to the Uzbek reader. Because it contains lexical units, that is, allusive names, taken from the Alpomish, a common cultural code for Uzbeks. If this poetic text is read by an Englishman or a Swede, the meaningful perception of the text becomes more complicated. Because the social origin and cultural commonality of the author and the reader are not the same.

For Uzbek literary texts, mainly the Quran, hadis, examples of folklore, famous poets and writers such as Alisher Navoi, Abdulla Qadiri, Gafur Gulam, Erkin Vahidov, Abdulla Oripov, as well as classic examples of world literature, popular tunes and songs, historical and social realities serve as an important source in creating the phenomenon of intertextuality.

There are many types of intertextuality in Uzbek literary texts, such as allusion, epigraph, title, quotation, parody, reminiscence.

In Uzbek literary texts, intertextuality is created mainly through texts from the following sources:

1. The Quran
2. The Hadis
3. Examples of folklore: epic, myth, narrative, fairy tale, proverb, folk song
4. The epics and poetic works of Alisher Navoi
5. The famous works of Uzbek and world literature

In this small study, we want to dwell on the intertextual units of folk epics found in Uzbek literary texts. In this study, descriptive, comparative, and linguocultural analysis methods were used. The research material includes examples from modern Uzbek poetry where folk epic elements serve as intertextual markers.

3. Result and Discussion

RESULTS

First of all, it will be appropriate if we give information about the epics. In some nations of the world, there are genres in which large-scale, important events related to

their history are narrated. In Uzbeks, this genre is called “doston”. The word “doston” means telling interesting stories, praising. There are epics created in two ways in our fiction [4]. The first is epics that have been sung orally by Bakhshis in folklore for centuries. The second is epics created by poets in written form. “Alpomish”, “Birth of Gorogli”, “Malikai Ayyor”, “Ravshan” from the Gorogli series; oral epics such as “Kuntugmish” and “Rustamkhan” are examples. Yusuf Khos Hajib’s “Kutadgu Bilig”, Haydar Khorazmi’s “Gul va Navroz”, Navai’s “Hayratul Abror”, “Farhad va Shirin”, “Layli va Majnun” are epics in written literature. It is necessary to separate from oral [5].

Epics are considered a part of the culture and history of a certain nation. They are at least as old as the existence of the nation. In them, the nation’s dreams, lifestyle, and dreams of the future are artistically expressed. Therefore, folk epics, like other folklore examples, are popular among people [6].

The epic is sung by Bakhshis. In ancient times, “bakhshi” meant a doctor who treats a patient with folk methods, and in some regions, a teacher. Today, this word mainly means an artist who sings folk epics. Bakhshi is a musician when he taps the music, and a singer when he puts poetic passages to a tune. He is also a poet who weaves fragments in an instant, a master of literary words when reciting prose passages from an epic. The poets never performs the epic in the same way, i.e. without changes. According to professor Hodi Zarifov, Amin Bakhshi from Bulungur sang the epic “Alpomish” for three months without boring his listeners. While Bakhshi is telling the epic, when Alpomish speaks in the epic “Alpomish”, he embodies the bravery of Alpomish, and the face of a beautiful girl when Barchin speaks. That is why epic nights were a big celebration for every listener. During these nights, all grudges between people are forgotten, life worries are gone [7]. All the imaginations of young and old, men and women were occupied with the events of the saga. These aspects are the reason why people’s epics are better preserved in people’s memory. Authors of written literary texts, that is, poets or writers, also came from this nation. Later, epics are also referred to in their works. Sometimes it arises from the demand of a certain literary work, sometimes it enters the text as an intertext as a ready-made template. We pay attention to the source of intertextual units in Uzbek literary texts, we can observe a large number of intertexts taken from folk epics of the “Alpomish” and “Gorogli” series [8].

O’g’lim, desang osmonlarga
G’irot bo’lib uchgayman,
Chambil yurtda **Alpomishga**
 Navkar bo’lib tushgayman.
 Padarkushdan pana qilib
 Ulug’beking quchgayman,
 G’ichir-g’ichir tishimdagi
 So’lig’imsan, Vatanim... [9].

(Say to the heavens, my son
 I fly with **Giro**t,
Alpomish in Chambil country
 I will become a servant.
 Taking refuge from Padarkush
 Give me a hug
 My teeth are gnashing
 You are my soul, my country...)

This passage is taken from the poem “My Country” by the national poet of Uzbekistan Muhammad Yusuf, in which allusive names related to the epic “Alpomish” appear as an intertext. Names such as Giro, Chambil, and Alpomish refer to the epic and further increase the quality of the ideological and content side of the poem. As we know, the epic “Alpomish” is one of the most ancient and artistically high examples of oral creativity of the Uzbek people. It is rated as a national epic. *Alpomish* has already become a symbol as a symbol of strength, courage, patriotism, loyalty, state [10]. If modern writers want to emphasize that their heroes are strong, loyal, patriotic, it is enough to call them

"Alpomish", known to everyone. The Uzbek reader can understand what the story is about, the character of the literary text or the development of events only through this intertext. Because the implicit content under *Alpomish* comes out with this name itself. In the example we have given, there is an allusion to the Epic of *Girot*. *Girot* is the name of Alpomish's beloved and loyal horse. The image of a horse is also depicted in folk epics as a second part of a young man. There are reasons for this. From time immemorial, the Uzbek people have attached special importance to the horse totem, and there are a number of traditions and proverbs related to it. This, of course, is a product of the process related to the history, lifestyle and culture of the people. *Girot* always comes to the aid of Alpomish, the main character of the epic, at the most necessary times. Emphasizing this feature, the poet expressed through intertext that his lyrical hero is ready to serve the country and is ready to fly as "labbay" when called. Hakimbek, the main character of the "Alpomish" epic, that is, Alpomish, is widely used in modern literary texts as a symbol of bravery, patriotism [11]. In addition to the above poem by M. Yusuf, there is an allusion to "Alpomish" in 18 places of "Saylanma" alone.

DISCUSSION

The fact that Alpomish is a role model for young men of the whole nation is one of the clichés that is often repeated in such poetry and prose works. The name Alpomish is included as an intertext not only as a symbol of courage, but also as a symbol of patriotism and loyalty. This can be seen in the example of intertexts in the following poems of Muhammad Yusuf:

Qalqoning bor, kim qasd qilsa gar joningga,
Alpomishlar ruhi yor har o'g'loningga.
 Asragaymiz giyohing ham gulday o'pib,
 Yovlar yaqin yo'lomagay qo'rg'oningga.
 Adaying bo'lgaymiz seni, O'zbekiston,
 Hech kimga bermaymiz seni, O'zbekiston [12]. (You have a shield, even if someone tries to kill you,

May the spirit of Alpomish be with each of your sons.

Let's protect you, kiss your flower like a flower,

Don't get too close to your fortress.

We will not give you to anyone, Uzbekistan)

In these verses, attention is focused on the patriotic character of the poet Alpomish. Through one allusive name, the content of the whole saga, the development of events in it is indicated, and as a result, the idea expressed in the poetic text is expressed even more clearly, and its effect is strengthened.

Heroes such as *Barchin*, *Kaldirgoch*, *Qultoy*, *Boybori*, *Boysari*, *Karajon*, *Ultontoz* from the epic "Alpomish" are often found in Uzbek literary texts as intertexts.

In Uzbek literary texts, after the "Alpomish" epic, excerpts from the epics of the "Gorogli" series, mainly *Gorogli*, the main character of the epic, appear as an intertextual unit.

Epics of the "Gorogli" series are very common among many peoples, and are still sung by Bakhshis in some peoples. These epics form unique series in the epic creativity of Uzbek, Tajik, Turkmen, Azerbaijani, Turkish, Kazakh, Karakalpak, Armenian, Georgian, Kurdish peoples. *Gorogli* is one of the favorite epic heroes of Siberian Tatars, Bulgarian Turks, Iranian Azerbaijanis, Stavropol Turkmen, and Afghan Uzbeks. The folklore of the world does not know of such a multi-faceted epic work that includes all kinds of categorization, spread on a very wide scale in such a wide area, mainly among Turkic peoples and partly among non-Turkic peoples. That is why the diplomat A. Khodzko, who recorded 13 majlis (epos) of the Azerbaijani version and published it with an English translation in 1842, said: "There is no corner in Asia where the name of *Gorogli* is not mentioned. Even in Bessarabia and Moldavia you will hear his name. "If the fame and popularity of writers is measured by the number of their readers, then *Firdavsi* will be slightly more than *Goroglu*," he wrote. [13]. In fact, the name *Gorogli* is actively used as an intertext in Uzbek literary texts.

G'irotda mingan Go'ro'g'li

Bobom qani, aytinglar,
Qo'ng'iroqlik Alpomish
Og'am qani, aytinglar?

(Gorogli, who rode Girot
Where is my grandfather, tell me
The call is Alpomish
Where is my brother, tell me?..) [14]

The Uzbek "Gorogli" differs from the "Gorogli" of other nations by the large size (monumentality) and diversity of the epics, which are combined into a series, based on the complex aspects of categorization. In Uzbek epics, Gorogli is the beg of the Turkmen and Uzbeks, a legitimate ruler, a wise teacher who cares for his people and homeland and protects it from the invasion of various enemies, and who has raised many national heroes [15]. Described as based on this aesthetic assessment given to the main character, the struggle of Gorogli, the azamat ruler of the epic Chambil country, together with his forty young men, against the neighboring kingdoms that threaten the security and freedom of the motherland, is manifested in the form of a whole people's movement, a war of liberation. It happens that this is the main issue in the Uzbek epic.

4. Conclusion

The names taken from the epic are included by the authors in the literary text for various purposes, they can sometimes create intertextuality in the form of a title, sometimes as a quotation. There is even a novel "Gorogli" by one of the famous writers of Uzbeks, Nazar Eshanqul. This is due to the popularity of the epic among the people. As a conclusion, it can be said that in Uzbek literary texts there are many fragments of folk epics, including epics such as "Alpomish", "Gorogli", and allusive names. They directly act as a source for intertextuality in literary texts. Excerpts from epics are directly combined with the content of the literary text, serving to make it ideologically perfect and facilitate the reader's understanding of the text. It also tells about the history and culture of the nation as an intertextual unit. Epic poems, as manifestations of oral folklore, have maintained a precedent status within particular nations for centuries, reflecting their culture, historical memory, and national identity. As an integral part of collective consciousness, these epics continue to coexist with the people who created and preserved them. Native speakers actively employ epic references both in literary discourse and in everyday communication, since even a single mention of a character or place name from an epic can convey deeper associative meanings and reveal the author's intention more explicitly and effectively. Folk epics function as cultural codes and serve as an important source of intertextuality, as they preserve collective historical experience, national values, and culturally significant symbols that are repeatedly referenced and reinterpreted in various types of discourse.

REFERENCES

- [1] U. Azim, Saylanma. Tashkent, Uzbekistan: Sharq, 1999, p. 289.
- [2] Y. Kristeva, "Bakhtin, slovo, dialog i roman," in Frantsuzskaya semiotika: Ot strukturalizma k poststrukturalizmu. Moscow, Russia, 2000, pp. 427–457.
- [3] N. A. Kuzmina, Intertekst i ego rol v protsessakh evolyutsii poeticheskogo yazyka. Yekaterinburg-Omsk, Russia, 1999, pp. 8–10.
- [4] N. A. Fateeva, "Intertekstualnost i yeyo funktsii v khudozhestvennom diskurse," Izvestiya AN. Seriya literatury i yazyka, vol. 56, no. 5, pp. 12–21, 1997.
- [5] N. A. Fateeva, "Tipologiya intertekstualnykh elementov i svyazey v khudozhestvennoy rechi," Izvestiya AN. Seriya literatury i yazyka, vol. 57, no. 5, pp. 25–38, 1998.
- [6] M. Yusuf, Saylanma. Tashkent, Uzbekistan: Sharq, 2007, p. 367.

-
- [7] M. F. Q. Xomidova, "Erkin Vohidov ijodida intertekstuallik," *Research and Education*, vol. 1, no. 9, pp. 525–533, 2022.
- [8] M. Xomidova, "Intertekst tushunchasi, tadqiqi va turlari," *Educational Research in Universal Sciences*, vol. 2, no. 4, pp. 902–908, 2023.
- [9] X. M. F. Qizi and L. Tursunova, "Intertextuality and its sources in the creation of Muhammad Yusuf," in *International Scientific Conferences with Higher Educational Institutions*, vol. 1, no. 23.12, Dec. 2022, pp. 41–50. [Online]. Available: Hozir.org
- [10] "Go'ro'g'li dostoni haqida insho," *AskInfo*, [Online]. Available: AskInfo.uz. [Accessed: May 23, 2026].
- [11] R. S. Madatovich, "Aesthetic features of the formation of a healthy environment in the upbringing of children in the family," *JournalNX*, vol. 6, no. 4, pp. 88–90, 2020.
- [12] R. Madatovich, "The role of civic responsibility in educating youth in a healthy spiritual environment in an information society," *Pubmedia Social Sciences and Humanities*, vol. 3, no. 1, p. 6, 2025.
- [13] R. S. Madatovich, "The role of preschool education and family education in the raising of a healthy balanced generation," *For Teachers*, vol. 57, no. 4, pp. 520–523, 2024.
- [14] T. A. Shaymardonov, "Sayidahmadxo'ja Siddiqiy-Ajziyning qofiya qo'llash mahorati," *Yosh Olimlar Axborotnomasi – Vestnik Molodykh Uchenykh*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 147–152, 2024.
- [15] T. A. Shaymardonov, "The role of Siddiqi-Ajzi in Uzbek jadid literature," *American Journal of Social and Humanitarian Research*, vol. 1, no. 4, pp. 91–100, 2020.