

## PERIODIZATION OF THE ORIGIN OF KARAKALPAK FOLK EPICS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF SCHOLARS

Bazarbaeva Guljahan Muratbaevna

Nukus State Pedagogical Institute

[guljahanbazarbaeva@gmail.com](mailto:guljahanbazarbaeva@gmail.com)

### Summary

The article discusses the scientific research conducted by scholars on the periods of emergence of Karakalpak folk epics.

### Keywords

epic, Karakalpak, heroism, folk art, epic, era, tribe, clan

**Introduction.** For the effectiveness of the reforms being carried out on the path of renewal and development in our society, it is necessary to revive the ancient culture and spirituality of our people. Therefore, we must analyze the national values depicted in Karakalpak folk epics from a historical and philosophical point of view, conduct scientific research, and evaluate them from the perspective of today.

Indeed, when studying the cultural heritage of each nation's past, we must study it in connection with that nation's history. Without knowledge of oral folk art, it is impossible to know the true national history of the people. Therefore, through the study of Karakalpak oral folk art, along with obtaining complete information about the history, economic-political, spiritual, and social life of our people at that time, it also helps to understand the character, philosophy, and worldview of the people.

**Literature Review.** The study of Karakalpak folk epics at the scientific stage began in the 1930s [1,3]. Scientific research on Karakalpak heroic epics has been conducted by a number of foreign and domestic specialists, including V.M.Zhirmunsky, A.K.Borovkov, A.A.Khodzhaev, S.P. Tolstov, T.A. Zhdanko, L.S. Tolstova and N. Daukaraev, K. Ayimbetov, I. Sagitov, K. Maksetov, N. Zhapakov, K. Mambetov, S. Bakhadirova, K. Allambergenov and other scientists.

It is gratifying that foreign scholars have conducted scientific research on the periods of the emergence of Karakalpak epics, which serves as a basis for scientific research. In this regard, let us dwell on the opinions of foreign scientists who conducted scientific research.

As a result of the research conducted by one of the Russian scholars, V.M. Zhirmunsky, the periodic layers of the epics "Forty Girls," "Alpamysh," and "Yedige" have been comprehensively studied. He connects the plot of the epic with historical events, stating that the events in "Forty Girls" are connected with the wars of the Kalmyks in the 15th-18th centuries and Nadir Shah's invasion of Khorezm [2,28]. The dastan "Alpamysh" originally appeared as a tale of ancient heroism, at the foot of the Altai Mountains in the 6th-8th centuries [3, 537-547]. The well-known researcher A.K. Borovkov, on the other hand, notes that the dastan "Yedige" appeared during the khanate-feudal period of the Mangit ulus [4,77].

**Discussion.** In the works of S.P.Tolstov, who conducted many scientific studies on the history of the Karakalpaks, related to the history of ancient Khorezm and the Karakalpaks, the plots of "Tumaris," a monument of the Massagetae period, are compared with the Karakalpak



epic "Forty Girls." He believes that in this dastan one can see the cry of the Massagetae epic about Tomyris. As evidence of this, he relies on information from Byzantine ambassadors proving the existence of Turkic tribes led by women in the vicinity of the Aral Sea behind Khorezm [5,22]. In the works of the ethnographer T.A. Zhdanko, based on ethnographic data presented in the epic "Forty Girls," it is noted that the traditions of the Saka, Massagetae, and Sarmatian peoples can be depicted in an archaic context [6,101-102].

The scholar L.S. Tolstova, who specifically studied the historical legends of the Southern Aral region, pays great attention in her works to the content of epics, along with various legends, in order to clarify and supplement the ethnogenesis of the Karakalpak people [7, 35].

The scientific research of our local scholars, who are devoted to our literature, is also noteworthy, and if we dwell on some of them, one of the earliest presenters is N. Daukaraev. In his scientific works, N. Daukaraev paid special attention to heroic epics [8,235]. When discussing their influence on our national history, he first and foremost focused on tribal and clan associations, clearly defining the significance of information in heroic epics. Based on the valuable work of N. Daukaraev, we can see from his works that he paid attention to three periodic layers, consisting of tribal or communal associations. First: The Middle Ages, i.e., the 10th-12th centuries, during which information about the Pechenegs, Black-Buri, Kipchaks, and Oghuz was studied, and their aspects related to the history of our people's emergence were presented using the example of epics. The second is the Golden Horde or Nogai period, the 13th-16th centuries. During this period, the Karakalpaks were formed during the Nogai period and, for historical reasons, came to the eastern-southern parts of the Aral Sea, and many dastans appeared during this period. Third: the Kalmyk period, i.e., the Kalmyk invasion and its consequences, the 17th-18th centuries [9,6-78]. Undoubtedly, N. Daukaraev conducted extensive research in this area and, based on this, studied folk epics by dividing them into periods.

**Results.** The renowned folklorist K.Ayimbetov defines the periods of the emergence of Karakalpak dastans as follows: 1. Old Times ("Shøryar"); 2. Pecheneg-Kipchak period (XI-XII centuries), ("Koblan"); 3. Golden Horde period (13th-15th centuries), ("Yedige"); 4. Kungrad-Baysun period (15th-16th centuries), ("Alpamysh," "Maspatscha"); 5. Bukhara-Bulungur period (16th-17th centuries), ("Forty Girls," "Bo'z o'g'lon," "Shirin-Shakar," "Yer-Ziyoar"); 6. Khorezm period (17th-20th centuries), ("Yusuf-Ahmad," "Gharib Oshiq," "Gorogli," "Yusuf-Zuliha," "Hurli-Zafran," etc.). He said the following about the approximate nature of the divisions: "To date, no complete research has been conducted on the periodization of the dastans performed by Karakalpak jirchis. Indeed, this is one of the difficult issues in folkloristics..." [10,94].

A number of opinions of Professor K. Maksetov about the periods of the emergence of Karakalpak dastans have their place in our national folklore. He generally considers the sources of Karakalpak folklore to be connected with the culture of the Saka-Massagetae tribes who inhabited the eastern Aral region in the 7th-5th centuries BC [11,5-6]. At the same time, Professor Q.Maqsetov, agreeing with the opinions of A.K.Borovkov and X.Zarifov regarding the period of the "Alpomish" epic's emergence, approves their opinion that patriarchal relations were formed during the 12th-15th centuries. Regarding the epic "Qoblan," he asserts that its emergence is linked to the Nogai and Kipchak periods and dates back to the 13th-18th centuries. He mentions that the epic "Forty Girls" covers events from the 13th-18th centuries. The epic "Yer ziyo'ar" dates back to the 13th-18th centuries, the epic "Məspatsha" to the 18th century, and the epic "Go'ro'g'li" to the late 16th and early 17th centuries. [12,81-113].

I. Sagitov, who conducted research on Karakalpak folk epics, assessing the historical significance of epics, writes: "Although the epic is not the true history itself, its historical



significance is very great. In some cases, the epic can preserve very valuable facts about the inner life of the people. Such facts cannot be found in historical sources. The epic provides much information about the people's past political, economic, and cultural life, language, customs, and traditions." In determining the period of the emergence of dastans, I. Sagitov pays great attention to the Golden Horde and its collapse, the historical events of the Nogai period. On several grounds, he divides the time of the emergence of dastans into two major periods: The first is the "Nugaili period," which encompasses the 14th-16th centuries. Many Karakalpak epics, such as "Yedige," "Alpamysh," "Koblan," etc., belong to the Nogai period. He cites the internal situation among the Nogais and the Kalmyk invasive policies as the basis for this. The second is the "Khorezm Period." The dastans that appeared during this period encompass the 16th-19th centuries [13,62].

**Conclusion.** K.Allambergenov, one of the devotees of Karakalpak literature, conducted significant scientific research on the epic "Yedige" and asserts that the epic appeared at the end of the 14th century and the first half of the 15th century, and even earlier, based on the historical epic "Yedige," which appeared among the historical peoples living in the Golden Horde [17,13-52].

Today we see that the restoration of our enormous, invaluable spiritual and cultural heritage, created by our ancestors, has been elevated to the level of state policy. After all, the revival of spiritual values is, first of all, the revival of our identity, national spirituality, and historical philosophy.

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