Karakalpak Dastans


This Article is brought to you for free and open access by 2030 Uzbekistan Research Online. It has been accepted for inclusion in Eurasian music science journal by an authorized editor of 2030 Uzbekistan Research Online. For more information, please contact brownman91@mail.ru.
Traditions of epic and song performance in Karakalpaks musical culture were of paramount importance.

Both all over Central Asia area and Karakalpakstan epic art is represented in the genre of dastan. Epic and romantic thinking manner, high poetry of the language so specific for dastan art throughout the region were that basis on which the local art schools features can be clearly seen, generated by subtle distinctions in aesthetic preferences, moral principles, and traditions of peoples inhabiting the interconnected neighboring countries.

Dastan can be defined as a comprehensive poetic legend, a story combining in itself prose, verses, and music.

Having emerged in the extreme antiquity, dastans in hundreds of variants have lived in folk memory, being passed on by word of mouth from generation to generation, reflecting historical events, philosophy, life, thoughts and expectations in heroic, powerful, fantastic and romantic plots. About the value of epic poems in spiritual life of Karakalpaks in the XIX century Chokan Valikhanov the Kazakh scientist wrote: «Thousand stories, narratives, songs …have kept in the memory of uncountable Karakalpaks …Karakalpaks are considered to be the top poets or singers in the steppes».

As historical sources attest, peoples, who inhabited the territory of modern Uzbekistan, had rich oral poetic art already in the IV — V centuries up to A. D. Many researchers consider that anonymous dastans came far-fetched until today resulted from the storytellers’ creative activity. Moreover, there are the grounds to assert that some author's texts of epic poems were created on the basis of their oral variants performed among people. The well-known researcher of Oriental literature V.V.Bartold writes about the existence of such practice saying that the author of the
immortal «Shah - name» Firdousi himself referred to epic materials collected for him by a peasant from Chach (Tashkent).

Many memorials of Karakalpaks spiritual life of the early periods were not kept intact. One can only definitely indicate the names of the authors who had the direct relation to Karakalpak oral literature. Such poets and storytellers as Soppaslisipirajirau, Asan - kaygi, Jirenshe, Ormambet and so on lived and worked in the Nogay Union (XIV — XVI centuries). They were at the cradle of Karakalpaks, Kazakhs, and Nogays’ written literature – the peoples, whose roots go back to the tribes of Nogay political association. The Sagas, songs, and legends created by them are kept by Karakalpak people until now.

In persistent struggle of Karakalpaks against Khiva yoke between the XVIII - XIX centuries the remarkable folk poets – Jienjirau, Kunhodja, Ajiniyaz, Berdah, Otesh were distinguished. The storyteller and poet Jienjirau is considered to be the father of Karakalpak poetry. Actually it is the period when dastan, earlier existing orally, actively participates in formation of written literature. Poems by Ajiniyaz «Bozatau», by Berdakh «Tsar - the petty tyrant», «Ernazar – biy» received national recognition. Following the tradition, the poets frequently acted as storytellers. Moreover, the majority of their works were aimed not at reading but first of all at singing, as there was no other way to communicate with the people but through a song.

Jienjirau

_Ruined People (from the poem)_

_In Turkistan, in our fathers’ country,_

_We could not find any shelter,_

_Though we worked the whole year round,_

_Even for half winter it was not enough found,_

_The bread of the meager soil._

_Black calamity has come —_  

_Rainless years in sequence._

_People suffered, died out and perished_  

_From khan’s depredations._
The corpses of people decayed
on the sands of parched rivers.

Pic.1. Berdakh (1827 – 1990 yy.)

Berdakh (Berdimurat) creative heritage takes a special place in spiritual culture of Karakalpak people. He filled up the poetry with new content; he became a mouth and truthful voice, the singer of thoughts and expectations of his people.

The future poet was born (1827) in a shabby yurt of a fisherman Kargabaya by name at the southern coast of the Aral Sea. He was named Berdimurat. His mother called him Berdakh and with this name he went down into poetry and remained in people’s grateful memory. Berdakh selflessly studied folk and classical eastern poetry, oral and written monuments of history of his people and Khoresm states. Berdakh’s senior contemporaries Kunhodja and Ajiniyaz played the role of the mentors in his poetic maturity. Fine singing art ability allowed Berdakh’s passionate and sincere songs to reach the people. He was known among the people as «Berdakhshoir» or «BerdakhBakhshi». He was a welcomed guest at weddings of the rich and poor, performed in auls(villages), took part in big feasts. Accompanying himself on the dutar he was skilful in exciting people up to depth of their souls and simultaneously inspiring them to struggle for their human dignity.

Folk character and democracy, riches and imagery of Berdakh’s language even today find vivid response in the hearts of people:
Friends, wheat is better than oats.
Rice is better than weeds that have sprouts.
One happy day, by George, is
Better that forty days of grieves and tears
And if all over sudden it happens so,
That enemy of yours subdues and bows
Hide your sword, unclench your fist-
It is much better forgive than kill.
«Better».

The researchers count up more than 50 epic poems in total in modern repertoire of Karakalpak storytellers. Among them the epos widely spread not only in Central Asia but in the Middle East - «Gorogli» («Kor-ogli»), «Alpamys», «Edige», «Ashik Garib», «Shokhsanam and Garib», but also having local distribution such as «Kirk Kiz», «Maspatsa», «Sharyar», «Koblan» and so on, and so forth.

Pic. 2. «Alpamys».

«Alpamys» is a bright sample of the heroic epos. Due to «Alpamys» researchers’ opinions, representing an epic genre at an early stage of the development, firstly it existed in the lower reaches of the Syr-Darya and on the Aral Sea coasts long before Uzbek, Karakalpak and Kazakh nationalities were formed. As well as in other samples of heroic epos, here, poem heroes - fearless Alpamys, a true friend Karajan, clever and beautiful Barshin, embodying dreams and notions of Karakalpak people about courage, strength, and love that oppose cruelty and insidiousness of khan and his surroundings. This conflict of good and evil forces interlaces all plotlines of the epos.
A well-known in the East the heroic epos «Korogli» («the Son of the Blind») in Karakalpak and in the majority Central Asian versions exists as «Gorogli» («the Son of the Grave») as in this case the hero is born by a dead mother in the grave. The intrigue of Central Asian option has many specific features and differs with an abundance of fabulous- fantastic elements. The epos «Gorogli» appeared among Karakalpaks approximately from the middle of the XVIII century. Azerbaijan is considered to be the native land of it, whence it was widely distributed practically throughout the East, incorporating features of history, art perception, and music of each people among which it was spread, reaching up the level of typically national, folk creation.

One of the remarkable treasuries of Karakalpak people in which their high moral ideals found expression is the epic poem «Kirk Kiz» («Forty girls»). The content of it gives the basis to assume that the events described go back to the most ancient layers of Karakalpaks ethnogenesis – to the Saka - Massagetaes tribes in management of whom matriarchal traditions were very strong. The poem narrates about girls - warriors’ squad feats, their chief of whom was beautiful and brave Gulaim. The plot about a girl – epic heroine was stamped in the epos of many peoples, but on the territory of Central Asia it was recorded only in Karakalpak folklore. Initial performance of the poem is connected with the name of Jienajirau, one of the oldest glorified Karakalpak storytellers, whose activity relates to the second half of the XVIII century.

The storytellers of «Kirk Kiz» frequently finish the epos by dedication to Jienjirau:

*There was an inspired singer Jien,*
*From the tribe of Muyten*
*And all Karakalpak people sing*
*A great number of his songs.*
*We shall give him our honor*
*For his first dastan that*
*Devoted to beauteous Gulaim.*
*Oh glory, oh glory to you Jien!*
Glory, to you, Jien!

«Kirk Kiz». Song twenty four.

The dastan was written down from Kurbanbay jirau.

It is interesting that the image of a girl – warrior found its reflection not only in the epos, but also in Karakalpak bride attire: a long dress of dark blue color was decorated with the rich embroidery which received the name «shirt of mail pattern» and bride headdress – saykele which reminds a fighting helmet.

People’s notions about beauty, courage, intellect, and love for freedom were embodied in Gulaim’s image:

Modest and harmonious was Gulaim,
She captivated dzhigits arresting their eyes,
Her marvelous beauty was glorified
And thundered far over the lands.
Whether her gold ring would flash,
Whether her young face would sparkle.
Dzhigits are ready to give both glory and their life
For her golden word
«Kirk Kiz». The first song.

Pic. 5. Erpolatjirau (1934 y)

Dastan is written down from Kurbanbayjirau, In «Edige» epos the main hero of «akmangit» ancestry acts as a commander who played an important role in the battles of times of Golden Orda Empire’s fall. Due to ideological reasons this poem’s performance was forbidden in 1944. It was revived from oblivion due to the country’s independence. Once again the readers and listeners have a chance to get acquainted with this priceless memorial of artistic thought.

«Garip ashik», representing a lyric-epic branch of dastans, is one of the finest creations of Karakalpak people due to its artistic merits. It is a perfect sample of folk poetry where alongside with pathetic lyrics one can find verses of philosophical and satirical content. This poem has come to stay in Karakalpak bakhshi repertoire. To a great extent the use by bakhshi a lot of well known folk melodies, such as «Ariukhan», «Ne boldiyarim kelmedi?» («What happened, why my love had not come?»),
«Derdinnen» («Sighing for you»), «Ush top» («Three pieces») promotes its big popularity among people.

Due to the researchers’ opinion epos «Ashig Garib» (Karakalpak version - «Garip ashik») is the result of authors' creativity. It was made up on the basis of verses of a Tabriz poet of the XVI century, Garib by name. The epos appeared among Karakalpaks between the XVIII-XIX centuries. The basic idea of the epos is glorification of Garip and Shansanem love which does not fear any barriers.

Everyone in love speaks in his own way,
Nightingales are singing in your garden,
I am wandering suffering from separation with you,
Sanamjan, why you have no mercy to me?
Garip speaks: «My cries reached the Heavens,
Having seen you, I lost me mind,
I am ready to sell my free head into slavery,
You are the Buyer, why not redeem me?»
«Kauender» («Fun») from dastan «Garip ashik».
It was written down from Japakbakhshi.

«Maspatsha» is one of the most favorite dastans of Karakalpak people. As well as «Kirk Kiz» («Forty girls»), it is actually Karakalpak; its plot is not familiar to other people’s folklore. In comparison with other dastans «Maspatsha» has not only heroic, but also lyrical nature distinctly expressed. The most known option of «Maspatsha» which was written down from the mouth of Kiyasjirau, includes almost 10 thousand poetic lines. All opportunities and language riches of Karakalpak folk poetry are unusually embodied brightly in it. The basis of a plotline of «Maspatsha» epos is antagonism of the hero and his relatives with evil forces. And if in other dastans it is the struggle against aggressors, in «Maspatsha» it is with thieves of happiness and love of heroes, i.e. Maspatsa and Aiparsha.
Thus the first meeting of Maspatscha and Aiparsha through the lips of Kiyasjirau is described:

As a falcon let down on a game-bird
With mad desire to catch it
A dzhigit loses his mind
To see such a wonderful picture
On this gentle canvas
On the face like the moon.
Popularity of Ajiniyaz epic poem «Bozatau», describing anti Khiva revolt of Karakalpaks in 1858- 1859 is huge. Basing on folk melody, it has got the value of a peculiar symbol of tragic pages in the history of Karakalpak people:

Chased and ruined, we are leaving out of sight,
Farewell, we abandon you, Boz - atau.
We say goodbye to you with tears in our eyes,

Pic. 7. «Maspatsya»
Farewell, we abandon you, Boz-atau.

Karakalpak dastans, as many Central Asian dastans, are based on alternation of prosaic and poetic sections. Being in close organic relation among themselves, they play equally important role in forming dramatic art of an epic poem.

Prosaic parts represent a narration about the basic events in heroes’ life, their adventures, and fights. Monologues, dialogues, and conversations of several persons yield dramatic nature to the work. Here a storyteller shows remarkable abilities of a story-teller; his speech is figurative and witty, full of proverbs and sayings. All this naturally causes lively response of listeners which feel as if they were the participants of action occurred. In these parts of dastan a storyteller improvises much, but as a rule he is not beyond the traditional strands.

Musicality and rhythm are distinctive features of Karakalpak dastan prose. It is connected probably with the fact that musical beginning is important in dastans. The following fragment from dastan «Alpamys» can be an example: «Alpamistiol tirip, men icine keltirip, Shybardiastinaminil, endi meniol jakilayin dep kelgeneken, — dep juuirip maydan gashigil Shubardin moyin kushklar, kozinen jasimon shaklap, ustindegibatirkayda dep Shybardansorap, dayisininkalayshikkanin da bilmeyenkildepbozlap, Gulbarshinbirsozdedi».

Pic. 7. Jumabayjirau Bazarov (1927-2006 yy.)
Frequently, rather refined, cadent changeable rhymed prose of dastans pursues the purpose not only to make it lively and urge the listeners attention, but also to correspond to the text mood.

In poetic sections of dastans, performed in singing form, the basic emphasis is made on disclosing of heroes inner world: love experiences, hatred to the enemies, an excited story of the hero about his vital troubles, etc. Here the musical beginning which strengthens emotional tension of the poetic view is of great importance. Despite great volume i.e. approximately from five up to twenty thousand poetic lines, oral existence, poetic basis of dastans remains almost unchanged, i.e. improvisation of prosaic parts is counterbalanced by stability of poetic ones. Dastans base on the principles of folk poetry: verses are syllabic, and the size is barmak.

Tradition bearers of epic performance in Karakalpakstan are jirau and bakhshi (baksis). Being the basic popular writers and keepers of epic poems, legends, they enjoyed and are still enjoying huge love of people. The listeners are captivated and excited not only by the content of dastans and their musical embodiment in their
creative works, but also to a certain degree by their figurative side - gesticulation, mimicry that gave the ground to name the performance of a storyteller «literary – poetic and musical solo performance» (S. Gulliev).

![Image](image_url)

**Pic. 10. Jaksilik jirauSirimbetov (1947- 2003 yy.)**

Jirau and bakhshi art demands big professional skills which one can achieve during long training by a venerable instructor. During the training a learner accompanies his teacher in his creative trips where he can be given the opportunity to sing some songs - terma. Gradually having perfected his skills and accumulated the repertoire, the disciple receives his teacher’s blessing for independent performances. Very often professional techniqueis inherited, the new generation continues the way laid up by the glorified ancestors.

The followers and pupils providing continuity of generations gather around outstanding storytellers who managed to create their bright individual style on the base of the best traditional performance achievements and laid down the foundation of directions or schools. Thus, schools of bakhshi Akimbet, Garibniyaz, Arzi, Oribay, Musa, Kiyasajirau, etc. received wide popularity.

Creative traditions of jirau and bakhshi have much in common, but there are also some differences in the form of playing music and in repertoire. In Karakalpakstan two styles of producing sounds were developed while performing dastans. The first one, often called a «guttural» style, people determine it as «ichkiovoz» («the internal, closed voice»). It means singing in special guttural manner and it connects more to a
jirau creation. And the storyteller, during the performance, demonstrated various means of material presentation: prosaic sections are given by a natural voice, musical-poetic ones in a guttural manner that gives the melodies extremely high level of tension and expression.

The second style, characterizing more the style of bakhshi, differs by naturalness of sounds producing. This singing is due to using an open voice allowing creating melody of the greater diapason and breath.

Jirau are the basic bearers of heroic dastans. In their art the motives of edification and mentoring are strong. Tragic and conflict moments in epos dramatic art are especially emphasized. Accompanying on the kobuz which due to peculiarity of its timbre and drawling sounds contrasts to guttural singing, the storyteller creates special archaic sound world bewitching and Pic. attention of a listener. Quite a number of folk melodies which are well-known to the listeners and are organically connected to dastans content are performed on the kobuz. These melodies («nama») are characterized by a small diapason, they are simple and laconic. The basic song genre to which storytellers address is «terma». This genre is distinguished by melody-recitative nature where the poetic line corresponds to each melodic phrase. In dastan limited melodic turns are usually used which being repeated, constantly vary. Also instrumental playing, repeating song tunes or the instrumental introduction to dastan have an important uniting value. Edifying songs, preparing the introduction to dastan, as well as its poetic parts, are sung being accompanied by kobuz, the prosaic part is told.
Dastan is not only the sample of oral folk art passed and polished from generation to generation, but it is also the result of performing and improvisational artistry of a certain storyteller. The level of this art to a certain extent determines listeners’ estimation of poetic advantages of dastan. In a galaxy of proficient masters of word creation and playing musical instruments special place belongs to jirau Kurbannabay Tajibaev. If the majority of storytellers usually have three or four dastans in their repertoire, Kyrbanbay jirau knew by heart and performed more than twenty. From seventeen epic poems recorded from him, seven have been published. Kyrbanbay jirau is distinguished from others not only by his ability to keep in his memory a lot of dastans, songs, sayings, legends, and terma, but he was talented in transforming this treasury of folk art. Possessing ability to improvisation, he made up songs himself, composed and performed original melodies on the kobuz. Creative gift of the storyteller has enriched an epic and musical heritage of Karakalpak people and gave an impetus to further development.
Kurbanbay Tajibaev was born in 1876 in a family of a poor peasant. Since young years he had to pass through the hard school of life, working as a shepherd for a bai (landlord). Once the bai heard the shepherd’s song and he was amazed at its brilliance. Answering his question where the shepherd had learnt to sing in such a way, Kurbanbay answered «In my dream», as according to the storytellers’ tradition. Kurbanbay’s songs have soon got popularity, people started to invite him to festivals and feasts. When he was eighteen, Kurbanbay went to a well-known storyteller Halmurat; while studying and serving during six years, he learnt eleven dastans by ear. Among these dastans there were «Forty girls», «Alpamys», «Koblan», «Shirin and Sheker», etc. Kurbanbay learnt artistic playing the kobuz from Nurabulla jirau. After the Soviet power establishment in Karakalpakstan Kurbanbay Tajibaev worked in the troupe of Karakalpak drama theatre, and then when dastans recording started - in the National Radio Committee. Despite his old age, Kurbanbay jirau was engaged in performing activity up to the end of his life.

Bakhshi are also the bearers and distributor of epic poems, but in their repertoire the basic emphasis is made on a lyrical branch of dastan art. They perform popular folk songs, also mainly of lyrical nature. In comparison with jirau, Bakhshis use the dutar or sing accompanied by an instrument ensemble. More often it is the dutar, gidjak and dapp (doira) or dutar, gidjak, bulaman and dapp. Last time tap or rhubarb is used in ensemble, instead of traditional string instruments.

Expressiveness and efficiency of this epic art direction impact to a great extent bases on musical means. Song sections performed by a strong and free voice, distinguishes melodic development in wider diapason, it is frequently topped with culmination and decorated with chanting songs. When preparing for singing of a new song part, after instrumental playing, bakhshi quite often tune up the instrument to a halftone, a tone higher. Similar audio high dramatic art certainly promotes tension strengthening in dastan’s perception.

Depending on the dastan’s content the nature of song parts can be of descanting-lyrical, dramatical and dancing nature. Thus, in every dastan the storyteller uses approximately from 15 up to 30 tunes. When selecting musical material bakhshi
address to folk art treasury, i.e. they frequently use known folk melodies of various genres or their variants. Creation of new melodies is also practiced and if the melody becomes popular it is used under the name of its creator. Some song parts of dastans are so expressive and emotionally infectious that they are frequently performed independently. Listeners’ knowledge of basic plotline allows perceiving these songs as part of dramatic art.

Performance style is determined by bakhshi belonging to this or that school, his vocal abilities and to a great extent by improvisation gift and talent. In today's practice one can notice more and more the influence of modern mass music and, first of all, of pop songs.

Practically any significant art phenomenon in the area of Central Asia people’s art has no precise national boundaries. Processes of interference are especially strong in the sphere of music - poetic art. Dastan art of people living in Khoresm oasis is an evident example. The fact of influence of Uzbek bakhshi Eshbai and Turkmen baksbi Soeg art on formation of Karakalpak version of the heroic epos «Korogli» is widely known.

Karakalpak storyteller Dzhapakbakhshi claimed that widely spread song «Eshbai» in Bukhara, Tashkent, Fergana, Khoresm and Karakalpakstan, where Eshbaibakhshi unsurpassed skill is praised, was created by a well-known Turkmen bakhshi Soeg:

*When he came to a wedding with saz in his hands,*

*Liven up the folks, caused a cheerful buzz,*

*He in a loud voice sang «yor- yor»,*  
*Eshbai voice reached precisely the skies.*

*Eshbai was the best among bakhshi,*  
*Under him Meshhed carpets were laid,*  
*His poor mother is now sobbing,*  
*Eshbai is dead, but his name is alive.*  
*Soegbakhshi had long-term friendly ties with*  
*Karakalpak bakhshi Musa.*
This friendship made a beneficial influence both on their art and dastan art development as a whole. Being known as mentors of young storytellers, they became the founders of two bakhshi schools, existing in Karakalpakstan until now.

Pic. 13. DjapakbakshiShomuratov (1892 -1973 yy.)

One of brightest representatives of Song bakhshi school was Djapak bakhshi Shomuratov. He was born in 1892 in Kipchak district of Karakalpakstan. Already in childhood Djapak Shomuratov had an opportunity to hear storytellers Musa bakhshi from Turtkul, Djuma bakhshi from Shabbaz, Shernazar bakhshi from Chimbay who accompanied by dutar performed popular lyrical songs, fragments from dastans. His first mentor was Atajan bakhshi. Possessing a pleasant and strong voice, Djapak rather quickly obtained a national recognition and the word bakhsi started to be used together with his name. As with the majority of bakhshi and jirau, creative life of Djapak bakhshi was connected to constant moving from place to place; he sang in many areas of Karakalpakstan. Simultaneously he got acquainted with art of already existing masters - storytellers, and enriched his repertoire. Such songs performed by Djapak bakhshi as «Eshbai», «Besperde» («Five Modes»), «Dembermes» («Without Intervals») became very popular. Djapak bakhshi did not limit his repertoire by singing only folk songs due to the tradition; he starts to compose songs using the texts of the poets he liked. His songs such as «the Amudarya», «Tolkin» («The Wave»), «Tazagul» still live in the folk memory. Djapak bakhshi, jointly with a composer Alimdzhan Halimov worked at a number of musical dramas. Using an inexhaustible source of folk music, he takes part in creation of new genre for Karakalpakstan.
Pic. 14. «Kizbakhshi» («a girl-bakhshi») Ziyada Sharipova

The art of women-story-tellers excite a particular interest. In contrast to many neighbouring people where under Moslem moral-ethic concepts, male and female worlds are clearly divided, with Karakalpaks as well as with other nomadic tribes this boundary is symbolic in many ways. Karakalpak women can openly perform in front of big gathering of their tribesmen. The history preserved the names of the talented women storytellers who were honored by the title as «kizbakhshi» («a girl-bakhshi»). The great poet and bakhshi Berdakh’s daughter Hurliman by name obtained great recognition (1861-1906). Overcoming all the barriers, she developed creative heritage of her father performing his songs and poems. Being a mentor of her son Karajan who became a recognized bakhshi and performed on the dutar she facilitated preservation of creative traditions of Berdakh’s school up to present time.

The tradition of female storytelling art having deep roots in modern culture has its continuation. In Karakalpakstan and beyond the art of kiz-bakhshi Ziyada Sharipova is well-known. She always took prizes at dastan performers competitions.
Until now, despite the rapid development of the various musical - poetic genres in the field of pop performance, their popularizations on the radio and TV, interest to jirau and bakhshi art is still high. However, today's realities, certainly, have brought its correctives to the classical forms of the epos. If in old time the storyteller had an opportunity to act in festivals during several days the modern way of life predetermines necessity to reduce time of dastans performance up to two, three hours. It is achieved, as a rule, by concentration of listeners’ attention only on the most significant, bright fragments. In full-fledged perception of dastans texts publication of the most known and beloved by people dastans is of great value. This fact became a noticeable event in the cultural life of Karakalpakstan. Dastans «Alpamysh», «Gorogli», «Kirk Kiz», «Maspatsha», «Garip ashik», «Sayatkhan and Khamra», «Kayshayim», «Kurbanbek» and so on at first were published in the Karakalpak language, later, the most perfect records were translated into the Uzbek and Russian languages. Unfortunately, similar records of musical components of the whole of dastan does not exist, noted only separate, the most popular melodies. Probably it is connected with the fact that the circle of tunes used in dastan constantly repeated and varies.

Evaluation of storytellers’ art as the expression of original cultural values, on the background of national consciousness revival of not only Karakalpak, but also of other peoples of Central Asia stimulated conducting a number of international and national festivals and competitions of creators and keepers of epic tradition.

Pic. 16. Scene from the opera «Azhiniyaz»
Plotlines, poetics, music of dastans as the samples of centuries-old national creativity polished to perfection, could not leave indifferent composers of Karakalpakistan. From the very beginning of composers’ school appearance and until today dastan lies in the basis of many works in various genres. Especially this tendency can be distinctly seen in the sphere of musical drama and opera where one can find out many threads connecting these genres. So, in the art of the republic musical dramas «Berdakh» (Djapak bakshi Shamuratov, A. Halimov), «Garip ashik» (A. Halimov), «Kirk Kiz» (A. Shamuratov, I. Jusupov), operas «Ajiniyaz», «Kirk Kiz», «Alpamys» (N. Muhammeddinov) have left a noticeable trace.