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Article

Historical Development Of Karakalpak Theater And Its Practical Significance In The Education And Upbringing Of Youth

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Abstract: This article examines the historical formation and development stages of Karakalpak theater, its role in national theatrical art, and its significance in the education and upbringing of youth. The possibilities of theater in the formation of national values, spiritual and moral qualities, aesthetic taste and feelings of patriotism are analyzed.

Keywords: Karakalpak theater, theatrical art, national values, youth education, aesthetic education, spirituality.

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Introduction

The great enlightener Mahmudkhoja Behbudi was not speaking in vain when he declared, "Theater is a school of moral instruction." Indeed, theater is a unique artistic medium that nurtures the human soul and inspires it toward goodness and virtue. Every theatergoer not only finds aesthetic delight, but also feels spiritually enriched, sensing a positive transformation within their inner world.

"Creating stage works that reflect the spirit of today's day, people's thoughts, and serious social problems is one of the most important tasks facing theater creators."[1]

One of the important factors determining the future of theatrical art is the attention paid to it at the level of state policy and the opportunities being created. In recent years, large-scale reforms have been implemented in our country based on promising decisions and decrees aimed at developing this sector. They serve not only to improve the theater's infrastructure but also to create content-rich, aesthetically mature stage works, expand the audience of young audiences, and strengthen the national theater school.

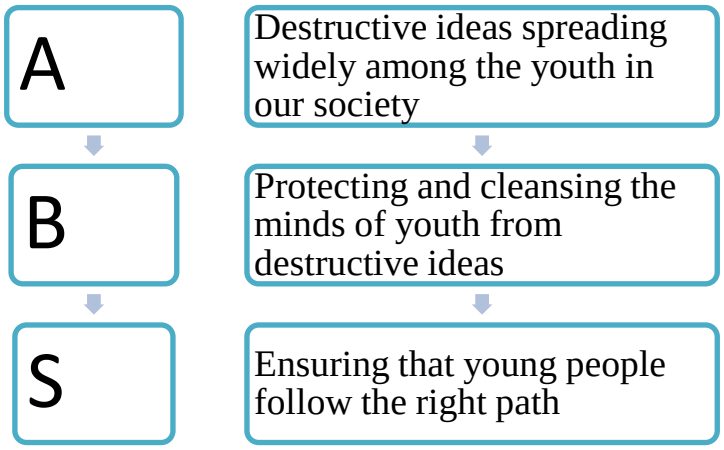
During the period of independence, the repertoire policy of theaters has been radically updated, and innovative approaches to directing and acting have begun to emerge. Modern views and methods have also been formed in the staging of dramatic works, the production system of plays, creative cooperation with playwrights, as well as communicative relations with the audience.

The new political and creative environment has increased the popularity and relevance of theatrical art, strengthening the connection with the audience. In particular, the successful participation of theaters of Karakalpakstan in international festivals attracts the attention of foreign audiences and receives their recognition. As a result, creative ties have been established with foreign theaters, and the prospects for international cultural cooperation are expanding.

Main part. Most importantly, the artistic education provided on the theater stage can be deeply reflected in a person's personality and serve to cause significant changes in their behavior, behavior, way of thinking, and aesthetic taste in society. Theater is not only a spectacle, but also a powerful educational tool that can reach the human heart and change it.

For example, theatrical art is considered a positive tool for preventing unpleasant situations that may occur in our society, changing the consciousness of young people in a positive direction, or instilling feelings of love for the Motherland in them; that is, if we perceive unpleasant traditions in society as column A, then if we perceive theatrical art as column B, which is a means of eliminating and preventing them, then we must understand the consciousness of young people as column C.

Figure 1.



As one of the most popular and influential forms of art in the world, theater has served for centuries to call people to humanity and kindness, to develop noble qualities and beautiful feelings in their hearts, to strengthen the principles of peace, friendship and harmony, high morality and justice in the life of society. [2]

The formal formation of the Karakalpak theater dates back to the early years of Soviet rule, specifically to the geopolitical changes during World War I. Although Uzbek, Kazakh, and Tatar national clubs were organized by Soviet soldiers in 1917 in the city of Turtkul (formerly Petro-Alexandrovsk), there was no Karakalpak club. This situation naturally had a certain negative impact on the development of Karakalpak art.

In accordance with the decree "On the Establishment of the Theater Department" adopted by the government in 1918, special attention was paid to the formation of theatrical art in the territory of Uzbekistan. Based on this decision, various organizations, creative groups, and theater and concert groups responsible for cultural and educational work began operating in the Republic of Karakalpakstan. Important steps have been taken to gather artists, provide cultural and educational services to the people, and develop theatrical and performing arts.
In 1919, the first state art institution–the "Section of the RSFSR Musical and Dramatic Society" – was established in the city of Petro-Aleksandrovsk (now Turtkul). This department was entrusted with the responsibility of leading amateur theater groups in the Amudarya department. The practice of inviting professional theater groups and circus troupes from central cities has also been established.

It was during these years that the processes of theatrical organization began in Karakalpakstan, and this situation lasted for a long time. In fact, the very term "theater" initially sounded unfamiliar and unnatural to the Karakalpak people. The reason is that, as noted in the work of the renowned scholar T. Allanazarov titled "Formation of National Directing in Karakalpak Theater", lexical concepts such as "theater" and "theater troupe" gradually began to gain popularity among the Karakalpak people starting from the mid-1920s. [3]

It was during this period that the establishment of theaters based on the Russian and European theater model began in national republics and regions that had no theatrical system in their national program. These theaters began to operate on the basis of the national language and aroused great interest among the audience. The emergence of the theater as a new initiative was met with surprise, amazement, and at the same time great interest among the people.

In the Republic of Karakalpakstan, cultural and educational centers were given the names of the new Soviet system and were imbued with Soviet ideology, and they were tasked with carrying out propaganda work among the people.

At that time, these cultural and educational centers operated under the names: “Red House,” “Red Yurt”, “Red Carriage”, “Red Caravan”, “Red Corner”, and “Red Row”. The resolution of the Karakalpak Regional Executive Committee “On the Establishment of the Karakalpak National Drama troupe,” adopted on April 11, 1926, is of historical significance as the first legal basis for the official formation of the Karakalpak National Theater. This resolution created the legal foundation for Karakalpak professional theatrical art and paved the way for the recognition of the activities initiated in this direction at the state level.

In accordance with this decision, the established troupe was named the “Tong Nuri” Karakalpak National Theater troupe, and from May 1926, the artist and stage personality Z.F.Kasymov was appointed its artistic director.
can also be recognized as a period when consistent efforts began to familiarize with the experiences of other theaters, study them, and adapt them to local stage practice. In this regard, the following quotation by the candidate of art history sciences, Professor T. Bayandiyev, is of particular importance: “In the Khorezm Republic that existed until 1924, specifically between 1922 and 1925, Hamza Hakimzoda Niyazi was sent on a business trip to Khorezm. It was during this period that Abdiraman Utepov, considered one of the founders of Karakalpak theater, met Hamza Niyazi and learned a number of information from him”. [4] The role of A. Utepov in reaching this stage was significant, as evidenced by his efforts in organizing the troupe, according to the opinion of the teacher T. Bayandiev: “A. Utepov’s creative activity, in particular, the content and plots of the stage works, were close to the work of Niyazi. During the creative dialogue between them, Utepov had an idea for a new plot for a comedic stage play. He created a comic play by analyzing what he saw, heard, and knew.” [4]

This event marks an important turning point in the history of Karakalpak theatrical art. Because it was from this period that theatrical activity began to develop on a certain organizational, administrative and creative basis. The name of the theater troupe – “Tong Nuri” – also expresses the ideas of awakening, spiritual growth, and national self-awareness.

Thus, the date of April 11, 1926, served as the first official documentary basis in the history of the formation of the Karakalpak National Theater and created an important foundation for the consistent development of theatrical art.
Through a series of efforts, on November 8, 1926, the “Tong Nuri” troupe was organized in Petro-Aleksandrovsk (now the Turtkul district), the center of the Republic of Karakalpakstan at that time, with the organizer being a local linguist scholar, then a teacher at the Turtkul City Teachers Training Technical School, and actually a Tatar young man–Zarif Fatixovich Kasimov. Later, this work was continued by Abdiraman Utepov. [6]

The historical pages of the Karakalpak National Theater began on November 8, 1926, with the solemn opening of the first act of the “Tong Nuri” theater with Kasym Auezov’s four-part historical drama “On the Path of Wishes”. This date is recorded in history as the date of the official establishment of the Karakalpak National Theater. “In the history of the Karakalpak people, there was no drama genre or theatrical art, but the name “Tong Nuri” was given to the troupe because it was the beginning of the night theater of the Karakalpak people in Soviet times”. “Indeed, a new type of entertainment has emerged since the morning of the great October”. [6]

However, a pressing question arises: why was the theater given the name “Tong Nuri,” when at that time Soviet ideology prevailed, and almost all organizations and cultural centers were given names beginning with the word “Qizil” (“Red House”, “Red Yurt”, “Red Corner”, “Red Caravan”, etc.) Several factors are scientifically based in this naming:

1. Spiritual and aesthetic awareness:
   The phrase “light of dawn” has a metaphorical meaning, symbolizing renewal, awakening, enlightenment, hope, and progress. Especially in a region where illiteracy and cultural decline had previously prevailed, the emergence of the first representative of stage art signifies a “new dawn”. This corresponds to the idea of the cultural renaissance of that time.
2. Contextual fit within Soviet ideology:
   In the era of Soviet ideology, any choice of name was associated with political symbols. Although the word “red” was a direct symbol of the communist idea, the phrase “light of dawn” also contained relevant social meanings: illuminating the people who emerged from class darkness with the “light of enlightenment” and stepping into a new era. This phrase was considered a symbol that was not politically extreme, but ideologically “acceptable”.

3. Relevance to local cultural context:

In Karakalpak folklore, images such as “dawn”, “sun”, and “light” are frequently encountered. In the local mentality, dawn is one of the symbols associated with renewal, life, and abundance. In this respect, the name “Tong nuri” means a pure aesthetic approach that reflects the local character, close to the spirit of the people. Undoubtedly, the establishment of theatrical art for the population of Karakalpakstan at that time was a very joyful and historical event. Because in the first half of the 20th century, especially in the 1920s and 1930s, modern mass media – cinema and television – had not yet become widespread.

In Karakalpak Soviet literature, the drama genre began to appear starting from 1926. The first representatives of Karakalpak Soviet dramaturgy first worked on one-act plays and works related to concert programs, and later reached the level of creating multi-act narrative dramas. Although these dramas were of low level in terms of dramatic and artistic plot construction, they played an important role in the early period of our drama. [6]

Now, if we look back, we will see that the theaters of Karakalpakstan emerged on the basis of theatrical elements that began in the Khorezm oasis, and the development of these elements is gradually, step by step, developing.

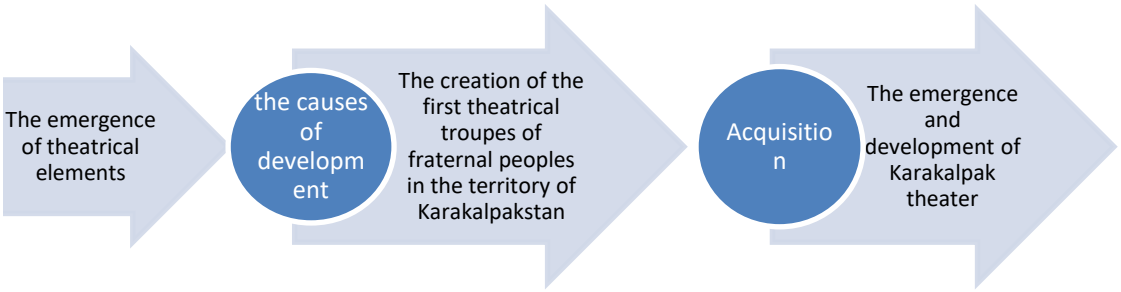


Figure 2.

Interest and love for the new theatrical art grew among the people day by day. As a result, amateur drama clubs operated in the cities and villages of Karakalpakstan and achieved great success. Due to the need to satisfy the artistic and aesthetic needs of the mass audience, the government of the Karakalpak Autonomy decided to unite large amateur theater groups and create a unified national troupe.

In accordance with the resolution of the Council of People’s Commissars of the RSFSR “On Improving Theater Activities” dated October 7, 1930, a commission sent from Moscow to Turtkul arrived. It includes director I.V. Korinman, a student of the leading Russian theater director V.E. Meyerhold. Later, he founded the Karakalpak State National Theater. Subsequently, in accordance with the resolution of the Karakalpak Regional Soviet Executive Committee dated December 25, 1930, I.V. Korinman was appointed the theater’s director, and A. Utepov was appointed director. Subsequently, A. Utepov raised the advanced issue of training theater personnel. [9]

In conclusion, it should be noted that “entertainments previously held on the streets have been somewhat simplified and moved to a specially equipped building”. The spectators, who used to watch on the ground, covered in dust, now had the opportunity to watch the performance sitting on the benches arranged in a civilized way. Previously, the performances were shown only in daylight, but now they are shown inside the building with the help of electric lighting. [3]

For its time, these changes were a great achievement in theatrical art and laid the foundation for the formation of a school of directing in the Karakalpak National Theater. These changes, implemented by director I.V. Korinman and his close collaborator A. Utepov, are recognized as an important factor in elevating local theatrical art to a professional level.

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