

KARAKALPAK LITERATURE DURING THE PERIOD OF INDEPENDENCE

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SUMMARY

The article deals with the Karakalpak literature of the period of Independence (1991-2019) as a whole. It reveals main features, some phenomena, achievements and shortcomings of the literature of that period. The works of some authors and popular books are generally analyzed. The article provides with plenty of factual materials, and they are compared with each other. The article reveals the main peculiarity of the progress of Karakalpak Literature in the last thirty years.

Keywords: the Literature of the period of Independence, poetry, prose, dramaturgy, literary criticism, genre, lyric poetry, epics, drama, poem, landscape lyrics, associative and meditative lyric poetry, poem, novel, story, narrative (short story), story – essay, novel-essay, science fiction novel, memoir, form of work, aesthetics of the work, detective, science fiction genres, method, methodology, talent, literary scholar, literary critic, lyrical hero, epic hero, writer's concept, structural analysis.

INTRODUCTION

As literature is the fruit of public conscience and intellectual talent, its progress defines to some degree the trend of society's development. Literature can immediately reflect the changes in society. In transforming the realities of life into artistic truth through images, literature is more operative in comparison with other kinds of art. Furthermore, literature is a sort of art which has no alternative in defining the people's view on life and society, and their world outlook. Therefore, the sharp contrast between the Karakalpak literature of the independence period, which has brought great changes into life, outlook and conscience of people, and the literature of the previous period could be evaluated from this point of view.

What main features differentiate the Karakalpak literature of the independence period from the previous literature? For centuries, we were the nation developing in Turkic and Islam world, in accordance with their rules and conventions. Furthermore, we had established ourselves as a nation enriched with Eastern culture when, by virtue of historical events, the communist ideology entered our territory to rule for some decades. This ideology defied both our national cultural values and the above-mentioned values considered to be their basis. Very many nationalities with different origin, values, faith, and worldview, lived in the former Soviet Union. However, the communist ideology tried to tuck them into one mould. It also tried to channel their culture and literature along one and the same line. On the basis of this goal, such a wrong method as the socialist realism, came to light. It did not allow literature to develop freely, it was like fetters bound around its feet. Some national literatures, which were tightly

bound by it, lost their originality. This ideology's mould decided the fate of the masterpieces which had been created over centuries by sorting them out as suitable and unsuitable. Censorship ruled over the literature. Of course, these were obnoxious activities.

As soon as we gained independence, literature got freed itself from fetters, i.e. aforementioned unpleasant burden. The national cultural values have been reinstated. Take for example, Karakalpak literature, the epos "Edige" which was forbidden to study and publish and the works of religious educator poets and writers are being restudied and published now. The works of our classic poets, which were revised to some degree by "over cautiousness", are reassuming their original forms. Each author started to approach freely the question: what should be touched upon in literature, and the question: what should not be discussed is not on the agenda at all. In my opinion this is the first and the most important achievement of our literature during the period of independence.

Literature is like a living organism. It tends to develop. Sometimes there may be a significant development or vice versa. Some factors make influence on it. From this point of view, one can notice two factors influencing the development of the Karakalpak literature of the independence period.

First, the factor that made the greatest influence on the literature of this period is the freedom: freedom of speech, freedom of choosing topics and the freedom to create characters. It is this factor that has created favourable conditions for the development of our literature in a new direction. The cancellation of the communist party control over the literature gave writers opportunities to write freely. Second, abandoning long-established traditions, stereotypes and switching over to the new ones requires plenty of research. It was not easy to answer the questions: what the main topic of the literature after gaining independence should be, who its heroes should be, and what method the authors should base their works on. Therefore, some writers who were used to writing according to the pre-assigned methods, ready topics and heroes, almost stopped writing.

Literature is not created according to a certain order. In spite of the genre or style, it comes into the world when an author has some important ideas that he can't help sharing with people. The main thing is that there are social wants (people's interest in literature and their demand for it). Today writers' and poets' works can serve as a convincing evidence of this, as many of them are read, generating public opinion.

It is certainly true, during the first years of the Independence, there were also low quality works based on ambiguity, false grandeur and hollow compliments. Unfortunately, market economy has also a negative influence on literature along with its positive influence. In some cases, there are attempts first to recover the money invested in publishing books. As a result, some books of low artistic quality written by amateur writers are also published. These are, of course, too sad. It goes without saying that this kind of shallow works will be driven out of literature when there is a strong competition among authors, and readers' demand for more interesting works. A literary work reveals the facts of life with the help of its heroes. Creating characters especially the character of the main hero results from this necessity. However, the main disadvantage of the aforementioned method of "socialist realism" was the requirement for character creation. In other words, the ideal of the main heroes in the works written according

to this method is one – in spite of any hardships to be the winner in all activities carried out in accordance with the requirements of the communist ideology. In the works describing the past the intelligentsia is usually dull, and those who belong to the group named “working people” are almost always clever, and in the works describing contemporary period, all people who raise the flag of the ideology, are always right.

Due to this approach positive and negative characters were always conspicuous to the readers, the main hero and his supporters were called positive characters, and the ones who were in the opposite side were considered as negative characters. The authors were also required to whiten or blacken them according to their status. Literary critics also evaluated works in accordance with these rules. This requirement led to the appearance of plenty of works, which were very similar to each other, had very little aesthetic influence and were boring to the readers.

The Karakalpak literature of this period was led by Ibraim Yusupov and Tolepbergen Kaipbergenov just like in some previous decades. Right after gaining Independence, Ibraim Yusupov, without any hesitation, started to create works based on the new content and new thinking. The poet published two volumes of his selected works, two collections of poems, and two poems in those years. His collection of works “Har kimning oz zamany bar” (Everybody has his own time) was the latest achievement of Karakalpak poetry. His poems “Tok tauyndaghy oilar” (Thoughts in the Tok Mountains), “Tyrnalar” (Heron), “Alys Malaysia koshelerinde” (In the Streets of Faraway Malaysia) and the epic poem “Watan topyraghy” (The Soil of the Motherland) can be regarded as a new phenomenon. In the poems of the poet, the content and creative expressions connect to form a synthesis of artistic expression and creative thinking.

In the epic poem “Watan topyraghy” (The Soil of the Motherland), with the help of the acute psychology of characters, the author describes how much people suffered under the Soviet rule, how many our compatriots lost their fatherland because of the “Red Policy” and got into trouble, and how nostalgia touched on their souls. This work describes how great the concept of Fatherland is through the characters of Abdisamet akhun and his son Mamyt (Mekhmet) who escaped to Turkey from repressions in their own country. It clearly explains how sad it is to be expelled from your own motherland by political games despite the fact that you didn’t commit any crime. The poet was devoted to poetry, the muse of inspiration, until the end of his life. Writing about it the poet said:

On the bank of the Kegeili,
A torrential and seething rivulet.
In the shade of the poplar I saw thee,
In summer for the first time we met.
My muse of inspiration, by you I am led,
You encourage me to look forward ahead.

At that time, Tolepbergen Kaipbergenov became popular with his strong works devoted to urgent problems and deep in content. Therefore, during those years, he was awarded several international literary prizes. The writer’s book “Kharakhalpakhan, tauakelshimen” (I am a Karakalpak, a Risk Lover), edited by the publishing house “Bilim” in 2003, was the conclusion of his long life and literary experiences. One can conclude that the writer created a new genre of fiction journalism in Karakalpak literature and publicistics.

Karakalpak literature has made significant progress in creating characters, especially the characters of main heroes. Poetry has retained its quality of responsiveness as ever and quickly absorbed the changes of the period and the breath of the era. Ibraim Yusupov, Ulmambet Khojanazarov, Tenelbai Sarsenbaev, Kenesbai Rakhmanov, Jienbai Izbaskhanov, Kenesbai Karimov, Hikmetulla Aiyembetov, Khalila Dauletnazarov, Saghynbai Ibragimov, Bakhtiyar Genjemuratov, Bazarbai Seitayev, Gulistan Matyakubova, Nabira Toreshova, MinaikhanJumanazarova, Fatima Mirzabaeva and others started to write their books with new inspiration. The real characters of the lyrical heroes, who are not shy, but can think freely and have a spiritual freedom, were created in their works. While in most lyrical works in pre-independence literature the authors tried to politicize love by depicting the feelings of lovers in accordance with their approach to work and the level of their participation in socialist emulation, now they switched over to pure feelings of lyrical heroes. Of course, lyrical works should be written in this way. In addition, the limits of lyrical genres became clearer.

The poems on social problems, that appeared in the second half of the 1980s, started to turn into sensitive lyrics. Poets created thinking lyrical heroes who are close to real life and free of boastfulness and lofty mood. The poets got interested in the history of our people. The lyrical portraits of figures that were forbidden in the past have appeared.

In their creative work, one can notice the artistic searches which were particularly felt in the 1980s of the last century. The Free verse developed. Landscape poetry is the genre which distinguishes itself by its aesthetic expressiveness. J. Izbaskhanov, People's poet of Uzbekistan and Karakalpakstan, has further extended the resources of this genre. In most of his poems he described nature in connection with the fate of human being. The lyrical forms, peculiar to East and West literature, synthesized with our national patterns of poetry and diversified them. As a result new methods of depiction were born. The lyrics of the poet acquired a new appearance in terms of content, too. Especially the landscape lyrics of the poet catch your eyes with their content based on new feelings and various images. The poet's aesthetic views and artistic thinking combine together and the depicted picture of the beauty does not leave the reader indifferent and cold. For example,

Has anybody seen the beauty?
Who got up scattering at dawn,
Sparkling there moved the, beauty
A handful of wish, isn't beautiful at dawn.

This is a lyricism that does not submit to any instructions or political directions. Feelings are clearly seen in it, and with its purity and sensitivity it titillates readers' spiritual world and gives them an aesthetic pleasure.

Bakhtiyar Genjemuratov's poem "Khitai jipegindegi bitig" (The Note in Chinese Silk) attracted the attention of not only Karakalpak but also Uzbek readers. In the poem the author values the concept of Motherland so highly that it has become one of the best poems on how to love one's country. Many poems of Bakhtiyar and his collection of poems "Oghyz darya bitikleri" (Oghyz Darya Notes) were published in the Uzbek language. The poet acted as a bridge between Karakalpak and Uzbek literature for a while. The poet who has already had his own place in Karakalpak literature and from whom interesting works are expected is Saghynbai Ibragimov.

In his books, he is trying to use different new styles. He is learning the best methods of the world literature, and enriching the Karakalpak literature with them. The poet approaches the world and people from the philosophical point of view. He tries to convey the process of the birth of thought and feelings in his works. Deep associative and meditative new forms are peculiar to his poems. Now, he is translating the works of classic poets into the Karakalpak language. Unfortunately, in recent years, there are very few poets entering the literature with their own style, say, like in the 1970s and 80's. Khalila Dauletnazarov, who wrote plenty of works on the basis of the synthesis of folk poetry and written poetry, seems to write poems repeating his old thoughts. The poet's readers are expecting from him works like "Tesiz Jurt" (Country without Master), "Ghairy Jurtlardaghy Kharakhalpakhtar" (Karakalpaks living abroad) written by him earlier. Recent works by Abilkhasym Otepbergenov, who writes poems according to the manner of east classical poetry, and tries to create the first hamsa in the Karakalpak literature, do not stand up to any criticism.

It is known that the prose, especially, the genre of novel, defines the level of development of any national literature. Famous Karakalpak novelist Tolepbergen Kaipbergenov continued working actively during the period of independence. His publicistic works, social and political essays on current events did not let the readers remain indifferent. In the first years of the Independence such writers as Shaudyrbai Seitov and Abdulla Sadykhov worked fruitfully and their novels took their worthy places in Karakalpak literature. The epic novel "Poskhan El" (Refugees) by Kamal Mambetov was a great success in Karakalpak literature. Kenesbai Karimov also worked productively on creating historical novels. His epic novel "Aghabii", consisting of four volumes, is a fiction about the history of Karakalpaks of the 19th century and the first thirty years of the 20th century. His novel "Ully Dasht Borileri" (Wolves of the Great Dasht) deals with the history of Turk Khaganate who lived in the V-V11-th of AD. Moreover, the writer showed his excellent knowledge of history by describing the historical events about Karakalpaks who seceded from Turgesh tribes as a separate nation in the V11 AD century under the ethnic name of Karakalpak. In the novel, one can find rare facts from the history of Karakalpaks. The writer's novel "Zardusht" attracts readers by parallel description of the events which took place before Christ and the events of the present time. The novel "Darwish" is about the visit of European traveler Ármin Vámbéry to Central Asia including Karakalpak territory in the 19th century and how he took Mullah Isakh with him to Europe. It also describes how Isakh studied, lived and decided to stay there. Generally speaking, these novels of the famous writer Kenesbai Karimov are worthy to hold its place not only in Karakalpak and Turkic literature but also in the world literature.

Orazbai Abdurkhanov, the writer of political essays, with his acute works, has become one of the leaders of this genre not only in Karakalpak but also in Uzbek literature. He brought up the Aral Sea problem long before our country gained Independence. His essay "Aralym dartim mening" (The Aral Sea – my headache) proved that the Aral Sea ecological catastrophe is the global disaster. Readers received well the novels by Kenesbai Allambergenov, Khyphshakhbai Matmuratov and stories by Abdimurat Atajanov. Humorists Muratbai Nizanov and Sailaubai Jumaghulov worked productively in this period. Especially, M. Nizanov developed his own creative style. His stories such as "Jat jurttaghy jetti kun" (The Seven days spent abroad),

“Akhshagul”, “Akhiret uikhisi” (The Sleep in the Hell) were the fruits of the writers hard work. The story Akhshagul can be named both the victory and bravery of the author. In this story, the author was able to find the worthy answer to the question how present day literary characters should be created. Akhshagul is neither pace-maker nor did she show any heroism in any field of life. She is an ordinary woman who carries all the household problems on her shoulders. This ordinariness of hers and her ability to have her own stand in life distinguish her from others, it brings the heroine closer to the truth of life. The author was able to turn today’s facts of life into artistic truth just by means of creating an ordinary woman’ image. The writer’s brave ideas, deep knowledge of life, allowed him to draw his own artistic conclusion which brought success to the work.

During the period of Independence, prose genres also diversified as did poetry. Works written in detective and science fiction genres have been published. S. Ismailov made his contribution to the development of science fiction with his book “Jurek galaktikasy” (The Galaxy of Heart). This writer’s story “Ashshy Miyweler” (Bitter Fruits), along with Sh. Seitov’s “Isine tirkelip tigilsin” (Should be Pinned on the Case), A. Abdiev’s “Sauin Siyir” (Dairy Cow), A. Akhnazarov’s “Diplomattaghy Khupya” (The Secret in the Portfolio) significantly developed the detective genre in the Karakalpak literature. Plenty of works in essay and memoir genres have also been written. It can be seen as positive development that some people with wide life experience started to write memoirs though they are not professional writers. For instance, K. Kamalov, S. Khanyazov, A. Hamraev, former leaders of the country, wrote their memoirs. Their works give an opportunity for readers to get information, and to some extent, knowledge on the political and ideological situation, and economical development that took place in our country in the last fifty years of the 20th century.

In this period, the famous journalists Sh. Usnatdinov and O. Otewliev wrote works in different genres of prose demonstrating their writing skills. Especially, the narrative essay of Sh. Usnatdinov about the first Karakalpak ballet master Polat Madreimov, and the novel essay about the 20th century poet-classic of the Karakalpak literature Ibrahim Yusupov, consisting of two volumes, are valuable with their richness of facts of life and the way views on the period are conveyed. Among women writers Gulaisha Esemuratova, Sarigul Bahadirova, Gulaim Tursinova, and Hurliman Otemuratova were actively engaged in creative work.

In the genre of short story writing Hurliman Otemuratova is very popular. It is worth noting that some of her short stories were written much more skillfully. In the past five years, the novel “Terbenbes” by Khipshakhbai Matmuratov and “Jin –Jipirding Uyasi” (The Den of the Dregs of Society) can be considered as major contribution to prose. If we take into consideration the fact that Khipshakhbai Matmuratov previously worked as a playwright, and it is his first step in prose, we can be convinced that the novel has been written fairly well. We should acknowledge that this novel has got its worthy place in the Karakalpak literature if we take into account that one of the main objectives of literature is spreading the goodwill among people. In the field of drama, such playwrights as K. Rakhmanov, O. Abdirakhmanov, M. Nizanov, Kh. Matmuratov, B. Baimurzaev, and S. Jumagulov produced their works. Turning to classical works is taking place in the present day Karakalpak drama. The new versions of the classical plays such as “Gharip Ashikh”, “Alpamis”, and “Edige” have been staged. More comedies have

been produced recently. It gives us pleasure to point out that some works of our playwrights have been translated into other languages and staged. However, it should be acknowledged that the Karakalpak drama of the Independence period is rather less productive than, say, in the 1970's. Popular plays that do not leave the stage for a long time have not been created yet. Therefore, not very funny comedies and plays translated from other languages are being put on the Karakalpak stage. After the old professional playwrights passed away, new ones have not appeared yet. The artistic quality of works by some new dramatists' is not high. However, it is worth noting that film script writing has made significant progress. On the bases of film scripts written by Karakalpakstan People's writer M. Nizanov feature films have been made and shown to cinema-goers. The films have had a great impact on the development of the cinematography of Karakalpakstan.

During the years of Independence, Karakalpak literary criticism has developed to a certain degree. Over these years seven doctors of science and about thirty candidates of science have successfully defended their degrees. They did not study literature generally, but on the basis of an exact theoretical problem. There appeared some works on the theory of literature. In addition, folklore studies also developed. Studying of folklore works from a new point of view has been established.

Numerous monographs have been published, and it is worth noting that some worth-while articles are being published not only in the scientific journals of Uzbekistan but also abroad. The scientific school of N. Daukharaev was continued by well-known literary critics such as N. Nurmukhammedov, S. Akhmetov, Kh. Makhsetov, K. Mambetov, A. Pakhratdinov, and Kh. Sultanov and later by the leading literary critics as Kh. Jarimbetov, and K. Allambergenov. In present-day Karakalpak literary criticism the study of some separate issues of literature is becoming increasingly more popular than studying it as a whole. The scientists who study such theoretical issues as the aesthetic objective of the belles-lettres, style the issues of artistic forms and structural study of the literary works have appeared. Academician J. Bazarbaev is showing his interest in literature by writing articles on some actual problems of literature. The articles on the history and written sources of our literature written by academician H. Khamidov serve as a guide for today's literary criticism. However, this field is not without shortcomings. The criticism does not keep up with time. There is lack of literary critics as in the 1970s and 80's who were engaged solely in literary criticism. As the evaluation of the literary process is not expressed in time, the aforementioned drawbacks continue to take place. Only when there are enough literary critics who have mastered the methods and the methodology of criticism and express their opinion on literary works in time, the literature will develop, there will be understanding between the authors and readers, and the interest in literature will increase. The Karakalpak literature of the period of Independence has entered the history as an integral part of the history of our literature. During its development it has had achievements and shortcomings apart from the ones which were pointed out above. The major achievement is that our literature parted with the socialist literature and got the new national image. As its weakness, we can point out its lacking behind the world process of literary development.

In general, literature is not only intellectual wealth but also the cultural treasure of our nation. Literature exists where there is a nation. Therefore, creative people should not forget that it is the sacred task of theirs to secure its constant development.

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