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THE ROLE OF THE ENSEMBLE "AYKULASH ZHULDYZLARY" IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ART OF KARAKALPAKSTAN

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ABSTRACT

In the second half of the XX century, a significant event took place in the Karakalpak national song and dance art, the folk ensemble "Aykulash" was founded. The ensemble laid the foundation of the choreographic art of Karakalpakstan with its creative activity. His repertoire has become a model of folk art. For 65 years of its creative activity, the ensemble has created a singing and dance school in Karakalpakstan. The ensemble presented its unique repertoire to the peoples of the world.

KEYWORDS

Art, choreography, musical art, national culture, dance, Karakalpak dance, folk songs, male dance, folklore ensemble, spiritual heritage, cultural ties.

INTRODUCTION

National art, preserved from generation to generation, reveals to the world the national culture of the people. This idea was reflected in the speech of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Sh.

Mirziyoyev with representatives of the Uzbek creative intelligentsia: "Our people are people who love art, performers, so they want to see them not only from screens of TVs , but also during the celebration



organized on the occasion of happy events» [1] - he stressed. For more than half a century of activity, the folklore ensemble "Aykulash zhuldyzlyary" managed to raise the unforgettable heritage - national art, to a new level.

In the years since independence, significant historical events took place that influenced the realization of our national identity and the revival of our national values. The art of Karakalpakstan has found recognition at the international level to the same extent as the art of any other nation. The collective of the Karakalpak State Folklore Ensemble "Aykulash zhuldyzlyary" has made a significant contribution in this matter.

In the XX century, the dance art (in Karakalpak – ayak oyiny, formed from the German word "tans"), thanks to the Russian word "dance", became widespread in the Karakalpak art. The dancer through dance, body movements, appearance, creates an artistic image. Dance is one of the oldest forms of folk art, in which people using movements generalized and transmitted historical events, traditions, mutual respect, love, joy and happiness.

MAIN PART

Artistic dance, unique and inimitable images created by it, are the embodiment of the national culture and art of the people. Karakalpak choreographic art is a vivid example of this. The foundations of the national Karakalpak art were formed in close connection with the rich spiritual heritage of the people throughout the centuries of history. Modern Karakalpak artistic dance reflects the traditions and customs, the culture of the people, the relationship between members of society, the traditions of reverent and respectful attitude towards the elderly. Karakalpak epic works and

legends, immortal creations, "Kyrq kyz", "Alpamys", "Shahriyar" embody the boundless love for the Motherland, the dreams of our people about a free and better life. Despite the difficulties and hardships that the people experienced during their centuries-old history, they managed to create and preserve a rich cultural heritage. To date, the Karakalpak State National Folklore Ensemble "Aykulash zhuldyzlyary" is a prominent representative of the Karakalpak artistic dance. In its half-century history from the moment of its foundation until 2006, the ensemble performed under the name of the Karakalpak State Song and Dance Ensemble "Aykulash". In 2006, it has been transformed into the Karakalpak national folklore ensemble "Aykulash zhuldyzlyary".

The second half of the XX century is characterized by the emergence of new institutions and organizations that subsequently enriched the genre of national artistic dance. In 1956, the folk dance ensemble "Aykulash" was formed at the Karakalpak State Theater of Music. In 1957, "Aykulash" separated from the theater and became part of the State Philharmonic [2]. Through its creative activity, it laid the cornerstone of the choreographic art of Karakalpakstan. The first dance performances of the ensemble "Ilme Sultan" and "Shopanlar" entered the permanent repertoire of the ensemble and became the best examples of folk art; were staged by the People's Artist of Uzbekistan and Karakalpakstan, laureate of the Berdakh Republican Prize Liza Honim Petrosova. In the first years of the ensemble's existence, its group consisted of amateur artists from cities and regions of the republic. Later, the Nukus Art College (now the Nukus College of Art) became the center for training true professionals. In 1957, the ensemble passed a special creative test during the week of Karakalpak literature and fine arts in Tashkent. In August of the same year, the ensemble took part for the first time in



the sixth world festival of youth and students in Moscow [3]. The members of the young ensemble Razgul Allambergenova, Zuleykha Saparova, Oryngul Muradinova, Kydyrbay Kurbanbayev, Amina Nazarova, Orynbay Baltabayev, Sadyk Baykhanov, Hapiz Salimov won the silver medal.

The dancers at the festival became famous not only for their performing arts, such famous Uzbek artists, choreographers as Lisa khonim Petrosova, Tamara Khonim, Ivan Protsenko, Mukarrama Turgunbayeva, Rozia Karimova, Galiya Izmailova and others were noted for their choreographic performances. Possessing high professionalism in the field of Uzbek choreography, the ensemble group in a relatively short time not only managed to prepare a number of artistic performances that adorned its repertoire, but also throughout the period of its existence was engaged in the preparation of worthy followers. Among them, People's Artist of Uzbekistan and Karakalpakstan, laureate of the State Prize Polat Madreymov. Since 1970, he has been the artistic director and chief choreographer of the ensemble. Under his leadership, a number of choreographic performances were staged. Among them are: "Auylda toy", "Alty kiz", "Kyzlar uyge kir", "Kyzlar oyiny", "Lazzat", "Zhilva", "Lolalar", male dances "Angalak", "Aral zhigitleri", "Dali zhigit", "Gudalak", "Ushirasyu" and others. The most significant are the merits of the first performers of dance performances, honored artists of Uzbekistan Shamen Zhantileuov, Yusuf Abipov, Sabit Raziev, Honored Artists of Karakalpakstan Shaida Bekmuratova, Raisa Bazarbayeva, Kobeisin Berdibekov and Polat Nadirbayev [4]. The ensemble has come a long creative way since its formation. He was popular with his viewers due to his unique creative character. These successes have been achieved as a result of the continuous improvement of the professional skills of the performers, new experiments and the skillful

performance of folk dances and dances of the peoples of the world.

In 1974, the ensemble "Aykulash" became a participant in the Days of Culture and Literature of Uzbekistan in Kazakhstan, in 1981 in Tajikistan. On October 25, 1978, following the results of the year, the "Aykulash" ensemble was awarded the Republican Prize. The background of the ensemble has a very rich traditions. L.Petrosova, K.Abdireymov, A.Tarikhov, O.Allambergenova, B.Matchanov, G.Syrymbetova, B.Nadirov, I.Khojametov contributed to the formation and creative development of the ensemble for their solo performance skills.

Since 1982, "Aykulash" has been transformed into a song and dance ensemble. From this period, the ensemble "Aykulash" began to tour actively, introducing the peoples of Central Asia to their singing and dancing art. In addition to Karakalpak folk dances, his repertoire includes folk dances of the Uzbek, Kazakh, Moldavian, Ukrainian, Russian and Dagestan people. Nargul Ruzmatova, Sabira Razieva, Yusup Abipov were among the most talented and bright dancers who impressed the experts with their skillful performances. Over time, the ensemble was replenished with young talents. Singers D. Atazhanov, Y. Rakhmatullaev, N. Shokirova, T. Khudaynazarova, E. Matzhanova, Kh. Allayarov, G. Ayimbetova, S. Baltaniyazov were remembered by the audience for their individual performing skills. Music for the dances was performed by M.Rakhmanova (rubop), R.Bazarbayeva (dap), V. Gorskikh (accordion). After the 1970s, musicians O.Mameshov, H.Paluanov, B.Kadirovlar joined the collective, in the 1980s A.Primbetov (dap), K.Shukurov (clarinet), S.Abdizhamilov (girzhek), S.Amanzholov (girzhek), O.Temirbaev, K.Atajanov (accordion), who, possessing professional performing skills, performed the whole



repertory of the ensemble. Since 2011, the group of musicians of the ensemble has been headed by S. Abdizhamilov.

After the Independence of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the declaring of this day a public holiday, the ensemble "Aykulash zhuldyzlary" became a regular participant in the national holidays "Mustakillik", "Navruz", held in Tashkent. It took part in the celebrations of the anniversaries of Ahmad Al-Farganiy, Jaloliddin Manguberdi, Imam at Termeziy, the 2700th anniversary of "Avesta", the anniversaries of the cities of Samarkand and Shakhrisabz, the 1000th anniversary of dastan "Alpamys", as well as the anniversaries of Karakalpak poets and enlighteners of the XIX century Berdakh and Ajiniyaz, held during that period in the republic.

On April 6, 1996, by the Decree of the First President I.A. Karimov, the Uzbeknavo touring and concert department was established. Since July 1, 1996, the Karakalpak State Song and Dance Ensemble, became part of the Karakalpak State Philharmonic Society and ensembles "Amu Tolkyny" and "Gulzar", the Karakalpak branch of "Uzbeknavo" [5].

During the years of independence, the ensemble became known as "Aykulash zhuldyzlary". During this period, Yu.Abipov, S.Raziev, K.Berdikov, K.Allayarov, Z.Turenliyazova, S.Baltaniyazov, O.Mameshov, D.Mambetmuratov became famous for their performing skills [6].

The desire to keep the championship at any republican competition or at a holiday, under the guidance of choreographer P.Madreyimov, has become a good tradition. In order to achieve such success, it was necessary to create national dances that were different from the previous ones, and the performers

had to be highly skilled. The result of such constant search was the creation of vocal and dance suites "Amanbaydyn ala ata" during Tashkent Independence Day celebration in 2000, at the celebration of Navruz in Tashkent in 2001, "Aydar toy", "Otauga mirat", "Ellerim bar" at the celebration of Independence Day in Tashkent in 2002, "Kiyiz basy" (consisting of 3 parts), "Zhurt basymyz say bolsyn", "Perzentinmen" in preparation for the celebration of the independence of our state in 2005.

In 2003, the ensemble "Aykulash" took part in the International Folklore Festival in South Korea. In September 2004, dance groups from Uzbekistan took part in the International Folklore Festival "Silk Road" in the People's Republic of China. The group included the ensemble "Aykulash" (10 dancers). Honored Worker of Culture of Uzbekistan and Karakalpakstan Tamara Davletmuratova recalls the ensemble's trip to China: "With the help of slides and a translator, I told about the culture of the Karakalpak people, their history. The interest in our delegation was great. Everyone was interested: where our ancestors came from, folklore, choreography, throat singing. I want to emphasize that the male dance caused a great resonance among the audience. Such dances as

"Shabandozlar", "Shagala" were called for an encore several times.[6]¹

Each production is the result of creativity of the first Karakalpak ballet master Polat Madreymov. In creating such artistic and deep choreographic works, a special role belongs to the talented poet Zaripbay Khalmuratov, who wrote the songs and the script. Together, P.Madreymov and the poet Z.Khalmuratov created such perfect vocal and dance suites and group dances that were included in the ensemble's repertoire, such as "Aydar toy", "Yellerim bar", "Kiyiz basyu", "Oynan-oyan zhitgiler", " Kyz zhitgiler seyili", "Bir kese shay". The creation of new dance performances does not happen by itself. It was a huge work and confrontation, which subsequently turns into self-confidence. In tandem with the composer P. Madreymov gave birth to a new production each time. Being very demanding of himself, he expected the same attitude from other performers. He asked his team with whom he spent many years of his life only one thing: love and respect for dance, discipline and responsibility.

The performance was so organic that the audience did not even notice that the master had added his touch to this story, turning it into a dance. Polat Madreimov worked hard on himself. He spent all his time searching for new expressive folklore nuances. Most of his productions were thematic in nature.

During rehearsals his ensemble is always extremely considerate, accurately performing the elements of the dance, which the master points out. For more than

¹ Tamara Davletmuratova. *Nemnogo o kulture* [A little about culture]. Nukus, Qaraqalpaqstan Publ., 2021. 151 p. (In Russian)

55 years he has perfected and polished the national choreography of the republic. I can confidently call him the founder and father of the professional Karakalpak dance. From an amateur group, "Aykulash" has turned into a professional ensemble, which is considered one of the best in the post-Soviet space.

Despite financial difficulties, hardships, the ensemble group has maintained its status, raised the bar high and is still considered the best professional choreographic group. During the years of independence, he enriched the folk and ritual stage dances of Karakalpakstan, created new choreographic performances: "Bir kese shay", "Toylaryna at oynatyp baraiyk", "Amanbaidyn ala aty". The result of such tireless work was the awarding of the orders "Mehnat Shukhrati" and "Fidokorona mehnatlari uchun".

In 2002, the composition "Yellerim bar" was created to the music of Zaripbay Khalmuratov. Before leaving for Tashkent, this dance was shown in the Nukus amphitheater and caused mixed reactions from a number of officials. Despite this, the ensemble performs in Tashkent. During the five days of the contest, the dance was not fully demonstrated. On the day of the last-chance performance for the members of the selection committee, the dancers wore just sewn costumes and the famous headdress of the Karakalpak people "Kara kalpak", which were sewn on ancient samples by talented designer Gulnara Yembergenova. The dancers put on wide, long yellow shapans, which, according to the ancestral traditions, were decorated with red braid, made from camel hair. During the dance, the young men wrapped the girls in



shapans so that they could not be seen, and their joint movements created the impression that they were riding. What that is wrapped in shapan was unknown. The audience could only see the legs of the young men who portrayed the horsemen. Suddenly out of the chapans 24 girls appeared. Until that moment, neither the girls themselves nor their legs were seen to the audience [7]. Surprised by this trick, the audience began to applaud. Minister of Culture Tamara Dauletmuratova, watching the dance, shed a tear, admiring the work of the ensemble. The first President Islam Abduganievich Karimov, who took part in the celebration of the 70th anniversary of Nukus in 2003, evaluating the work of the ensemble "Aykulash zhulduzly", noted: "If the ensemble took part in the competition, I would give them the first place [8]. This assessment of the Head of State was welcomed by the audience.

During the last years, the ensemble has staged vocal and dance suites to the music of Nazhimatdin Mukhammeddinov. Among them, the attention of a wide audience is drawn by the dance "Bayram bugun", "Epsinbay", "Bir kese shay", "Kiyiz basyu", the music to which was written by Z. Khalmuratov, as well as the dance "Aydar toy" to folk music. As a result of many years of creative activity of the ensemble, honored artists and talented ballet dancers Salima Sarsenova, Zarafshan Nuratdinova, Sultan Kunnazarov, Gulchekhra Amanbayeva, Konys Tilegenov, Rakhim Muradov appeared in the republic. Murat Bekmuratov, Sultan Duysenbayev, Mukhabbat Bekchanova, Mukhabbat Sultabayeva and other dancers who, thanks to their skill, occupied a leading position in the ensemble became one of the most popular ballet performers. To date, the Karakalpak folklore ensemble "Aykulash zhulduzly", during its more than half a century of creative activity, has created many folk and processional dances. A huge role in enriching the

repertoire of the ensemble, its popularization throughout the world belongs to its director, chief choreographer, People's Artist of Uzbekistan and Karakalpakstan, laureate of the state prize, Honored Worker of Culture of Tatarstan, director and the first Karakalpak ballet master Polat Madreymov.

Thanks to the creativity of Polat Madreymov, Karakalpak folk dances, national choreography, choreographic compositions, vocal and choreographic suites have been developed. Since the Anniversary of the Proclamation Day of the Republic of Uzbekistan, annually, "Aykulash zhulduzly" takes part in competitions organized in honor of the celebration of this date, makes its worthy contribution. The creative activity of the first Karakalpak choreographer Polat Madreymov, who enriched the repertoire of the ensemble with compositions of folk dances, created historical and modern dances with national flavor, was highly appreciated by our government. On November 30, 1992, by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, for many years of painstaking work, for exemplary preparation in holding and organizing the celebration of Independence Day in Tashkent, he was awarded a Certificate of Honor. He was awarded the Second Certificate of Honor on December 19, 1992 for creative activity during the 60th anniversary of the city of Nukus, which was attended by the first President I.A. Karimov. Dances performed by the ensemble every year gain a new audience and have become real "ambassadors of culture and friendship." The fact is that the ensemble has contributed to the development of interethnic cultural ties, introducing the peoples of the world to our national art. To date, the Karakalpak national folklore ensemble "Aykulash zhulduzly" with its constant number of performers: 24 boys and 24 girls, worthily represents the peoples of Uzbekistan and Karakalpakstan on many ballet stages of the world, performs masterpieces of national folklore and



modern dance. The creative activity of the chief choreographer of the ensemble Polat Madremov, who respected the national art of the Karakalpak people and achieved significant success, was appreciated. By the Decree of the President, he was awarded in 2000 the Order of "Mehnat Shuhrati", in 2006 the Order of "Fidokorona Mehnati Uchun". In 2015, in Samarkand, at the "Sharq taronalari" festival, musicians of the folk folklore ensemble "Aykulash Zhuldyzlary", under the leadership of the People's Artist of Karakalpakstan Sultan Abdizhamilov, took part performing the composition "Karakalpak navolari", consisting of three parts and were awarded a special UNESCO diploma of the second degree [9].

CONCLUSION

On November 27, 2021, the 65th anniversary of the founding of the ensemble was widely celebrated in the republic. Therefore, archival photos from the collection of the "Aykulash" ensemble were exhibited in the foyer of the Berdakh Karakalpak State Academic Theater, an exhibition of national costumes was organized and videos dedicated to the history of the ensemble were shown. During its creative activity, the Karakalpak national folklore ensemble "Aykulash" has played a great role in the development of our national culture. The ensemble's collective still goes on creative business trips to Russia, Bashkortostan, Azerbaijan, Moldova, Ukraine, Belarus, Georgia, Turkey and a number of other countries, actively participates in international festivals, participates in the days of "culture and literature of Karakalpakstan" which have been arranged over the years, thus contributing to the strengthening of cultural and friendly ties.

The historical activity of the ensemble is an example for future generations and allows us to appreciate our national art. In conclusion, I would like to once again

draw attention to the words of the first President of Uzbekistan: "The Karakalpak intelligentsia is to be commended, first of all, the creative intelligentsia: poets and writers, artists and composers, famous artists, as well as young people who are just starting their creative activity, who has created such a beautiful art and culture, preserved it and pass it from generation to generation. As long as there is such literature, such art, such culture, the Karakalpak people will not be forgotten..." [10]. The historical activity of the ensemble leaves behind for future generations an example of the careful attitude to our national values, national culture and national art, - he noted.

In summing up the research, it should be said that at the present stage, the national folklore ensemble "Aykulash zhuldyzlary" for its 65-year creative activity, firstly, laid the foundations of choreographic art in Karakalpakstan, secondly, created the best examples of folk art, thirdly, laid the foundations of the art of song and dance in the republic, fourthly, the ensemble's collective, with its unique repertoire, has made a significant contribution to the introducing the peoples of the world to our national art.

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