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"THE ATTITUDE TOWARD REALITY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF UZBEK THEATRICAL CRITICISM"

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Abstract: This article analyzes the issue of attitude toward reality in the development of Uzbek theatrical criticism. It examines the artistic and aesthetic principles of theatrical criticism, its connection with social life and the demands of the time, as well as critics' approaches to evaluating reality reflected in stage works. The study reveals the close relationship between art and society through the example of Uzbek theatrical criticism.

Keywords: Uzbek theatrical criticism, reality, stage art, artistic and aesthetic principles, social environment, theatre criticism

Annotatsiya: Mazkur maqolada o'zbek teatr tanqidchiligining shakllanishi va rivojlanish bosqichlarida voqeylikka munosabat masalasi tahlil qilinadi. Unda teatr tanqidchiligining badiiy-estetik mezonlari, ijtimoiy hayot va davr talablari bilan bog'liqligi, shuningdek, tanqidchilarning sahna asarlarida aks etgan voqelikni baholash tamoyillari yoritiladi. Tadqiqot davomida o'zbek teatr tanqidchiligi misolida san'at va jamiyat o'rtasidagi uzviy aloqalar ochib beriladi.

Kalit so'zlar: o'zbek teatr tanqidchiligi, voqeylik, sahna san'ati, badiiy-estetik qarashlar, ijtimoiy muhit, teatr tanqidi

Аннотация: В статье рассматривается проблема отношения к действительности в процессе становления и развития узбекской театральной критики. Анализируются художественно-эстетические принципы театральной критики, её связь с социальными условиями и требованиями эпохи, а также подходы критиков к оценке сценической интерпретации действительности. Исследование раскрывает взаимосвязь искусства и общества на примере узбекской театральной критики.

Ключевые слова: узбекская театральная критика, действительность, сценическое искусство, художественно-эстетические принципы, социальная среда, театральная критика

The formation, development, and advancement of theatrical art are inextricably linked with the role of theatre scholars and critics who guide its progress, acknowledge its achievements and inspire creative growth, while also identifying shortcomings and encouraging their correction. This characteristic is equally inherent in the development of Uzbek theatre.

The influence and significance of theatrical criticism played a crucial role in the formation and development of Uzbek theatre. Uzbek theatre has consistently remained within the close attention of theatre scholars and literary critics. In his article *"Amateur Theatre in the Old City,"* Abdulla Qodiriy (1894–1938) did not disparage young Uzbek amateur performers; on the contrary, he sincerely welcomed the emergence of a new national theatre among Uzbeks. He wrote: *"In recent years, theatres have been developing culturally and have succeeded in creating a national theatre."* However, he expressed concern over the lack of professional directors capable of providing genuine stage education to young performers and lamented the poverty of the troupe's repertoire. For this reason, he called upon Russian artists to assist the

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young Uzbek theatre and recommended turning to Russian dramaturgy instead of staging unproductive melodramas.

Notably, the publication of Abdulla Qodiriy's drama *"The Unfortunate Groom"* in 1915 attracted the attention not only of Tashkent amateurs but also of Russian theatre critics. The first review of the play appeared in the newspaper *Turkistanskiy Vedomosti*, written by G. Andreev. In his review, Andreev noted that the plot was drawn from the contemporary life of Turkestan Muslims and addressed the issue of extravagance associated with traditional wedding ceremonies. He emphasized the play's vivid conversational language and expressed optimism about its upcoming stage production.

Miyonbuzruk Solihov (1891–1938) and his pamphlet *"Materials for the History of Uzbek Theatre"* occupy a significant place in the development of theatrical criticism. From the 1920s, Uzbek theatre entered its second phase, characterized by a rise to professional maturity. During this period, a new generation of critics—including Qayum Ramazon, Said Ziyo, Sanjar Siddiq, Miyonbuzruk Solihov, and G'ozi Yunus—emerged, introducing a distinct critical movement into Uzbek theatre studies.

Born in Tashkent in 1897, Qayum Ramazon contributed extensively to theatre scholarship through his articles published in newspapers such as *Turkiston* and *Ishtirokiyun*, and journals like *Yer Yuzi*, *Maorif va O'qituvchi*, and *Mash'ala*. His works—including *"Stage Literature," "Layli and Majnun," "Shaykh San'an,"* and others—secured his place in the field of theatre studies.

Said Ziyo, through articles such as *"Asli and Karam"* and *"Recent Performances,"* made a notable contribution to defining the developmental stages and future directions of the emerging Uzbek theatre.

Among the figures whose contributions are often overlooked, yet were instrumental in the formation and advancement of theatre studies, are Bosit Siddiqov, Miyonbuzruk Solihov, and G'ozi Yunus. Their selfless efforts played a vital role in popularizing theatre through critical articles published between 1920 and 1935 in journals and newspapers such as *Yer Yuzi*, *Maorif va O'qituvchi*, *Bilim O'chog'i*, *Mash'ala*, *Sadoyi Farg'ona*, and *Ishtirokiyun*.

Particularly noteworthy is the role of G'ozi Yunus, whose primary contribution to theatrical criticism occurred between 1919 and 1924. His articles, published in periodicals such as *Tong*, *Ishtirokiyun*, and *Yangi Sharq*, addressed issues of revolutionary spirit in literature, dramaturgy, stage practice, and the necessity of theatre as a cultural institution.

It is essential to emphasize that at the beginning of the twentieth century, Jadid intellectuals advanced the enduring idea that *"Theatre is a powerful means of education."* Their wide-ranging activities encompassed dramaturgy, directing, acting, theatre theory, history, and critical analysis. Writers and critics such as Abdulla Qodiriy, Mirmulla Shermuhamedov, Sanjar Siddiq, and G'ozi Yunus vividly reflected the theatrical life of their era through reviews and analytical articles.

As anti-colonial liberation movements intensified in Turkestan, democratic ideals gained momentum among local intellectuals, which was also reflected in theatrical criticism. One such figure was Mirmuhsin Shermuhamedov, who actively criticized theatre repertoires that failed to

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represent the people's struggle against colonial oppression. He argued that theatre should expose feudal and colonial injustice and inspire the spirit of liberation among the masses.

By the second decade of the twentieth century, Uzbek theatrical criticism had begun actively promoting European theatre and played a decisive role in shaping a new national theatre based on European models. The period between 1917 and 1925 marked a new stage in the development of Uzbek theatrical criticism, characterized by intense ideological struggle and vibrant aesthetic debates. These discussions focused on creating a repertoire aligned with Soviet ideology, raising professional standards, and cultivating a new audience.

During this time, critics such as Cho'lpon, Abdulla Qodiriy, Mirmulla Shermuhamedov, and others actively contributed to the discourse on the future of Uzbek theatre. While some advocated for a return to traditional folk theatre, others supported the integration of advanced European theatrical practices. This debate shaped the artistic direction of early Uzbek theatre.

A central figure in this discourse was Mahmudxo'ja Behbudiy, widely regarded as the founder of Jadidism in Turkestan. As an educator, playwright, publisher, and theatre organizer, Behbudiy championed theatre as a vital institution for moral education and social enlightenment. In his seminal article *"What Is Theatre?"* he defined theatre as a mirror of life, a school of ethics, and a powerful tool for awakening public consciousness.

Behbudiy emphasized that theatre transcends mere entertainment; it serves as a platform for moral instruction, social critique, and intellectual engagement. He argued that through stage performance, audiences—both literate and illiterate—could directly experience life's realities, making theatre an unparalleled educational institution.

By creating the first written Uzbek drama *"Padarkush"* (*The Parricide*), Behbudiy laid the foundation for national dramaturgy and personally led its stage realization. The play addressed themes of ignorance, moral decay, education, and national responsibility, marking a turning point in the history of Uzbek theatre.

Behbudiy and his contemporaries not only theorized about theatre but actively worked to establish and institutionalize it. Their efforts ensured that theatre became an enduring cultural force within Uzbek society. Today, the realization of their aspirations is evident in an independent and culturally vibrant Uzbekistan, where the legacy of figures like Mahmudxo'ja Behbudiy continues to inspire national consciousness and artistic development.

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