



MODERN TURKIC THEATER PROCESS

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Abstract

The article analyzes the problem of collaboration of theaters of the Turkic countries at the present stage. The key factors of their unification under the auspices of the international theater festival «Nauruz» (Kazan), which has become a trend in the development of Turkic stage culture, are found. The analysis is based on the professional achievements of Turkic theaters, as well as a variety of productive educational programs, including «Fundamentals of Biomechanics and the emotional world of an actor of the Turkic world», «Sufi dance techniques in educating an actor's spirituality», «An Ancient Legend as a Material for a Modern Performance», «Acting skills and traditional theater forms of Turkic peoples», «Ritual as the basis of stage action», etc. The study applied the methods of structural and typological analysis of theatrical performances presented at the theater forums.

Keywords: «Nauruz» International Theater Festival, Turkic Theater, theater cultures, traditions, Central Asia, «Nauruz school».

Introduction

In the 21st century, the Turkic theater process is gaining strength and is developing more intensively. The movement goes in different directions. This is convincingly demonstrated by the international festivals of Turkic theaters.

The most significant and largest of them is «Nauruz». It is held in the capital of Tatarstan – Kazan every two years.

For the first time this festival was held in Alma-Ata in 1989 in the status of regional - Central Asia and Kazakhstan, and received the name «Nauruz» in honor of

the celebration of spring renewal and New Year according to the eastern calendar. Subsequently, it made a circle around the capitals of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, expanding the geography of participants – Turkic theaters.

After radical socio-political changes of the 1990s, «Nauruz» ceased to exist. In 1998, it was renewed already in the status of the International Theater Festival of Turkic Peoples «Nauruz» on the basis of the G. Kamal Tatar State Academic Theater, in order to preserve cultural identity and national languages in the context of globalization.

Viewers were given the opportunity to watch the best performances of theaters of the countries of Central Asia: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan; Turkey, Azerbaijan, Gagauzia (Moldova), the Turkic peoples of Russia – Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, the North Caucasus, Tuva, Khakassia, Chuvashia, Yakutia, etc. But this was a time when the auditoriums were empty throughout the post-Soviet space. Therefore, the organizing committee had a difficult task - to attract the public to the theater. The renewed «Nauruz», first of all, amazed with the variety of theatrical cultures, traditions, the beauty of folk music, and the brightness of national costumes. Muslims, Christians, Tengrians, shamanists – they are all united by a common language family, a relationship of customs, a similar mentality, and ancestral home.

Methods

At first, the international theater festival was a meeting place for theaters. However, it does not just develop the creative communications of Turkic artists and directors. It gives a powerful impetus to moving forward, generates new ideas

and forms, and transforms the theater process. Gradually, «Nauruz» turned into an important territory of the collaboration that inspired the deep transformations of the Turkic theater. Therefore, the study applied the methods of structural and typological analysis of theatrical forms inherent in the Turkic peoples.

Results

Throughout the period of «Nauruz» existence, the selection rules were adjusted, the genre variety of performances expanded, and the program changed significantly. In the early 2000s, the festival program included many illustrative productions of folklore, performances of the historical and heroic repertoire, in which traditionalism and ethnography pushed aside theatricality and modernity. One of the main problems came to light – the change of generations in national theater direction. Most of the professionals crossed the border of a deeply mature age, the young were just starting to declare themselves, and there was no qualitative new drama on stage.

Currently, the situation has changed dramatically. Over the past years, a professionally mature generation of bright talented 30-40-year-old directors has gained strength. In addition, young directors are free of canons, they surprise with creative courage and innovative contemporary theater thinking. In Bashkortostan, these are Ayrat Abushakhmanov and Ilsur Kazakbaev, in Tatarstan – Ilgiz Zainiev and very young but loudly renowned Aidar Zabbarov, in Sakha Yakutia – Sergey Potapov, in Kazakhstan – Dina Zhumabayeva, Aydin Salbanov, Farhat Moldagali, in Kyrgyzstan - Shamil Diykanbaev, in the Altai Republic – Emma Irisheva, in Tuva – Marina Idam, etc. The development of directing is ahead of the

development of dramaturgy [3, p. 34].

Since 2015, each «Nauruz» is dedicated to the stage culture of certain people: in 2015 – to Kazakh Theater, in 2017 – to Yakut Theater, in 2019 – to Bashkir Theater. Such special programs show the whole spectrum of genres and directions based on national traditions and ways of mastering new forms of world theater, reveal the aspects of the artistic method of directors. In 2017, spectators and participants of the festival watched several productions of the Yakut director S. Potapov, reflecting the versatility and creative audacity of his talent. After that, several theaters of Kazakhstan immediately invited him for stage production. The practice of inviting directors of national theaters to stage performances has intensified.

In 2019, «Nauruz» was held for the 14th time. During this time, the format of the festival has changed. Since 2010, it has been alternating with the International Theater and Education Forum for the young generation of theater workers. This increases the importance of «Nauruz», since along with creative tasks, important professional educational goals are set with a long-term perspective. For example, at the fifth forum, the organizing committee defined the following goals:

- identification and stimulation of nationally dominant principles of acting, enrichment of the theoretical base of actors of theaters of Turkic peoples;
- training workers of theaters of Turkic peoples in modern theater technologies;
- familiarization and implementation of modern forms of theatrical art in the practice of theaters of Turkic peoples;
- development and strengthening of theatrical relations of Turkic peoples, their integration into the international theater process;

- development of national forms of theatrical art and stimulation of the creative initiative of theater figures;

- creating conditions for professional communication and the emergence of partnerships, joint creative projects.

The scale of the forum is impressive. In a few days, about 20 experienced theater teachers from different countries (mainly from Russia, of course) provide intensive training for young actors, directors, scenographers, theater critics, musicians, managers in various areas in the form of master classes, lectures, seminars, workshops, trainings, creative laboratories.

Discussion

An extremely important educational project contributes to the improvement of professional qualifications of theater practitioners and the artistic level of Turkic theaters. How interesting, varied and productive such training programs are can be judged by their names, for example, «Fundamentals of Biomechanics and the emotional world of the actor of the Turkic world», «Sufi dance techniques in the education of the actor's spirituality», «Ancient legend as a material for a modern performance», «Music of a national performance as an element of theater action», «Acting skills and traditional theater forms of Turkic peoples», «Ritual as the basis of stage action».

The workshops are aimed at maintaining a balance between the national cultural heritage and the artistic context of the modern theater. The work of artists in the laboratories clearly shows how their professional skills are closely connected with the traditions of national performing arts. For example, many forum participants showed great interest in throat singing classes, typical of the musical culture of Tuvans, Altai, Khakass, and

others; in Yakut traditional toyuk singing, in playing the Turkic national instruments. This is natural, since, for example, most Kazakh theaters are music and drama theaters. In accordance with this, the ability of artists to sing and play dombra is actively used in productions.

The best theaters of Russia and foreign countries are regularly invited to the festival and forum. So, in 2016, the National Theater of Hungary (Budapest) with the performance «The Scourge of God» by M. Banfi directed by Attila Vidnyansky became an honored guest of the IV International Theater and Education Forum «Nauruz».

The emotional intensity of the stage action, densely saturated with metaphors and symbols, distinguishes powerful, impressive, spectacular production about the leader of the Huns Attila. It was a clear stage confirmation of the relevance of the theme of the interaction of cultures. In the description of the play the theater poses a question: «Can we stay true to our roots and save ourselves, or will the future world impose on us a new national identity in the name of peace and integrity?» Will the East and the West forever oppose each other or is dialogue possible?

An important result of the many years of «Nauruz» activity is the ever-increasing number of Turkic performances – nominees and laureates of the «Golden Mask» Russian National Theater Award. In 2005, staging of «Macbeth» by Yakut director Sergei Potapov at the P. Oyunsky Sakha Theater received «Golden Mask». In addition, the leading Tatar director Farid Bikchantaev was nominated for the prize with the performances «A Summer's Day» (2014) and «Antigone» (2018), the Bashkir director Ayrat Abushakhmanov with the production «The Black Faces» (2016). The latter received «Golden Mask» for the best

costumes by A. Nesterov.

The nominees of 2019 were the performances «Zuleikha opens her eyes» by A. Abushakhmanov at the M. Gafuri Bashkir Drama Theater (Ufa), «My Friend Hamlet» by S. Potapov at the P. Oyunsky Sakha Theater, and «And is this life?» by director Aidar Zabbarov at G. Kamal Tatar State Academic Theater (Kazan). The performance of the Bashkir theater received «Golden Mask». All this is an important result of a planned thoughtful work, which indicates that the productions are interesting not only to spectators of territorial autonomies and republics. Thanks to the festival, Turkic theaters become part of the global theater process.

Since 2015, each festival is dedicated to the stage culture of a certain people: 2015 – to the Kazakh theater, 2017 – to the Yakut, 2019 – to the Bashkir. Such special programs reveal the whole spectrum of genres and trends based on national traditions and show the ways of mastering new forms of world theater.

From year to year «Nauruz» expands the field of activity and now, in addition to the main festival and forum, the International Festival of student performances (national studios) «Nauruz school» is held. The new generation presents itself as vivid and talented. The creative growth of young people is always interesting to follow. In 2016 performance «Heart of a Dog» by A. Zabbarov, still a student of directing faculty at the Russian Institute of Theater Arts – GITIS (course of S. V. Zhenovach), was shown at the forum. In 2017, his pre-graduation work at the G. Kamal Theater «Clouds are floating on» was already presented, which aroused great interest both among professionals and common viewers. And in 2019, A. Zabbarov's performance «And is this life?», nominated for the «Golden Mask», was an absolute success.

Another International Festival of Turkic-speaking theaters – «Tuganlyk» is held in the capital of Bashkortostan - Ufa. After a long pause of several years, it resumed its work in 2019 for the seventh time.

Most outstanding performances were «Zuleikha opens her eyes» directed by A. Abushakhmanov at the M. Gafuri Bashkir Drama Theater, «And is this life?» by A. Zabbarov at the G. Kamal Tatar State Academic Theater (Kazan), and «Taganok» by A. Fedorov at the Sterlitamak Bashkir Drama Theater. All these performances are based on prose works. This is no coincidence. An integral part of Turkic

oral culture is the epos, the poetics of which influenced early national literature, including dramaturgy [1, p. 62; 2, p. 123].

Prose, like the epos, has a narrative structure. Remaining within its framework, the three above-mentioned performances are densely filled with stage action and acting. As a result of the theatricalization of narrative, artistic imagery, metaphors and symbols came to the fore. Performances are distinguished by talented directing, excellent acting and very interesting scenography. (*Figure 1,2,3*)



Figure 1. A scene from the play «Zuleikha opens her eyes» of the M. Gafuri Bashkir Drama Theater



Figure 2. A scene from the play «And is this life?» of the G. Kamal Tatar State Academic Theater



Figure 3. A scene from the performance «Taganok» of the Sterlitamak Bashkir Drama Theater

In addition to the actual theater process, Turkic theater studies are also developing. An important indicator is that several significant conferences took place in 2019. For example, in May in Ufa (Bashkortostan, Russia) the international scientific conference «Dialogue of Cultures and the Turkic-speaking theater» was held as part of the international festival «Tuganlyk» (Ufa). A very important aspect was considered – the development of the Turkic theater and the preservation of identity in the context of globalization.

In October, in Baku, the Azerbaijan State University of Culture and Arts under the auspices of TÜRKSOY (International Organization of Turkic Culture) held an international scientific conference «Theatrical traditions of Turkic-speaking peoples and the problems of their modification in the world of modern theater», dedicated to the 70th anniversary of the outstanding director of the Azerbaijani theater Vagif Ibrahimoglu. Theorists and practitioners of theater: theater experts, directors, teachers, researchers studying the traditions, aesthetics, poetics and art forms of Turkic theaters, took part in it.

In November 2019, in Gorno-Altai, the International Theater Forum of Turkic

Peoples «The Epic Heritage of the Eurasian Peoples in Stage Performance» was held. This is a very relevant topic for Turkic theaters, since epic productions have always occupied a significant part of the repertoire.

The reports raised issues of the development of the Yakut Olonkho Theater as a classical form of the national theater of Sakha; epic heritage of the Altai people; the rite «yuğ» as an epic form of proto-theater in ancient Turkic culture; the evolution of the folk hero on the Kazakh stage; actualization of folklore heritage in the Tuvan theater; about the role of the theater in preserving national identity and language. In addition, reports on epos were heard in the theaters of Kalmykia, Bashkortostan, and Altai. Almost all speakers spoke about the need to find new forms of epic heritage scenic embodiment.

In the days of the forum, two performances were shown: «Maadai-Kara» by A. G. Kalkin of Yakut director A. Borisov at the P. V. Kuchiyaka National Theater (Altai) and the student play «Kyys Debiliye» by N.P. Burnashev directed by M. Markova (Olonkho Theater, Arctic Institute of Culture and Arts, Yakutsk). Viewers were clearly shown two different ways of stage embodiment of the epic heritage.

The direction of A. Borisov remained committed to a great epic style in compliance with national (this time Altai) spectacular ceremonies and customs, with picturesque attributes and costumes, with monumental protagonist and antagonist, with a pronounced straightforward clash of opposing forces. In a large-scale production, three venues were involved: the lobby of the 1st floor, the main stage and the lobby of the 2nd floor – in fact, the whole space of the theater.

The student performance on Yakut folklore emphasized the spectacular nature of the theater, showed a modern stage approach based on the sketch method, the charm of youth, youthful energy and theatrical irony. With a very expressive witty plastic solution of the production, the director maintained a balance between the epic aspect and the modern theater. In the first performance everything was determined by the word, while in the second – by a physical action based on national play traditions. (*Figure 4*)



Figure 4. A scene from the performance «Kyys Debiliye» of the Arctic Institute of Culture and Arts

Conclusion

In fact, the theme of the forum was picked up and continued in December in Kazan at the international scientific-practical conference «Theater of the Turkic world. Development prospects». Much attention was paid to the direction of national theaters, the experiment as an essential problem of stage practice, the correlation of the universality of the artistic language and national traditions, the search for a hero on the modern stage, the role of the theater in preserving the national cultural code, reflecting

the problems of interethnic tolerance in modern drama and theater.

Much has changed in the Turkic theater since the beginning of the century: an approach to classics and cultural heritage, a modern stage language has been developed, performative and documentary productions, inclusive and «site-specific», physical theater and «soundrama» can be seen. Readings of new plays, drama and directing laboratories gained great popularity, and festivals multiply. The directors try and develop new forms, combine the epic and play beginnings,

ritual and narrative. All these phenomena of the theatrical process find theoretical understanding in the writings of theater researchers, in discussions at the forums

and conferences of theater experts and allow us to deduce the trajectory of the prospects for artistic development.

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СОВРЕМЕННЫЙ ТЮРКСКИЙ ТЕАТРАЛЬНЫЙ ПРОЦЕСС

Аннотация

В статье анализируется проблема коллаборации театров тюркских стран на современном этапе. Найдены ключевые факторы их объединения под эгидой международного театрального фестиваля «Науруз» (Казань), ставшего трендом развития тюркской сценической культуры. За основу анализа взяты профессиональные достижения тюркских театров, а также разнообразные продуктивные образовательные программы, среди которых «Основы биомеханики и эмоциональный мир актера тюркского мира», «Суфийские методики танца в воспитании духовности актера», «Древняя легенда как материал для современного спектакля», «Актерское мастерство и традиционные театральные формы тюркских народов», «Ритуал как основа сценического действия» и др. В исследовании применены методы структурного и типологического анализа театральных форм спектаклей, представленных на театральных форумах.

Ключевые слова: Международный театральный фестиваль «Науруз», тюркский театр, театральные культуры, традиции, Центральная Азия, «Науруз school».

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ҚАЗІРГІ ТҮРКІ ТЕАТРЫНЫҢ ҮДЕРІСІ**Аңдатпа**

Мақалада қазіргі кезеңдегі түркі елдері театрларының коллаборация мәселесі талданады. Түркі сахналық мәдениетін дамытудың тренді болған "Наурыз" (Қазан) Халықаралық театр фестивалі аясында оларды біріктірудің негізгі факторлары табылды. Талдаудың негізіне түркі театрларының кәсіби жетістіктері, сондай-ақ әртүрлі өнімді білім беру бағдарламалары алынды, олардың ішінде "Биомеханика негіздері және түркі әлемі актерінің эмоциялық әлемі", "Актердің рухани тәрбиесіндегі бидің суфийлік әдістемесі", "Ежелгі аңыз қазіргі заманғы спектакльге арналған материал ретінде", "Актерлік шеберлік және түркі халықтарының дәстүрлі театрлық түрлері", "Сахналық әрекеттің негізі ретіндегі ритуал" және т.б. зерттеу театралдық форумдарда ұсынылған спектакльдердің театр формаларына құрылымдық және типологиялық талдау әдістері қолданылды.

Тірек сөздер: Халықаралық театр фестивалі "Наурыз", түркі театры, театр мәдениеті, дәстүр, Орталық Азия, "Наурыз school".

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