

Ecology And Nature In Uzbek Documentary Films During The Years Of Independence (On The Example Of Products Of "Qoraqalpaqfilm" Studio)

Khujaniyazov Uktam Yeshbaevich

Doctor of Philosophy in History (PhD)

Head of the Department of "Law and Social and Humanitarian Sciences"

Karakalpak Academic Lyceum of the

Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan

Abstract: This scientific article analyzes documentary films created by the filmmakers of the "Qoraqalpaqfilm" studio, focusing on the Aral Sea crisis, ecological disasters and their impact on the flora and fauna of the Aral Sea region, and the unique features of the nature of the Republic of Karakalpakstan as shown in these films.

Keywords: Independence, studio, ecology, nature, plants, water, sea, documentary film, human, river.

Introduction.

Karakalpakstan, as part of Uzbekistan, is a unique region distinguished by its climate, geological structure, fauna and flora, surface and underground resources, as well as the lifestyle of its people. In recent years, environmental disasters have had a strong impact on all its reserves, causing significant changes in the region's natural environment, flora and fauna. Especially, the plant world of the region has suffered irreparable losses, which are now being addressed by the state and leadership, mobilizing all available forces, especially the research efforts of the scientific community. In such circumstances, the Karakalpakfilm studio has also been trying, through the art of documentary cinema, to showcase the tragedy of the Aral Sea, its ecological consequences, and the region's beautiful and rich nature.

Analysis of Literature and Methodology.

In this scientific article, research methods such as historicism, systematization, analytical, and problem-chronological approaches were used. The article also utilized and analyzed the scientific works of authors including M.B. Abdreymov, B.S. Madiyarov, G.N. Tajadinova, T.Zh. Masharipova, and A. Askarov, as well as archival documents relevant to the topic.

Discussion.

The formation of the cinematic art in Karakalpakstan dates back to the 1970s. Initially, on the basis of the decision number 45 of the State Committee for Cinematography under the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated February 19, 1970, a branch of the Uzbek Documentary and Popular Science Films Studio was opened in Nukus. Later, in 1990, based on the Karakalpakstan branch of the Uzbek Documentary and Popular Science Films Studio, the "Karakalpakfilm" studio was established. The establishment of the studio and its transition to an independent film studio, "Karakalpakfilm," became a significant event in the cultural life of the people of the Republic of Karakalpakstan.

Results.

During the years of independence, artistic and documentary films produced by "Karakalpakfilm" achieved great acclaim among cinema lovers, thanks to their artistic excellence, popular spirit, accurate reflection of the people's character and soul, topicality, and the mastery of the actors performing the roles. The studio has won the true love and respect of real cinema enthusiasts.

The documentary films produced by "Karakalpakfilm" are distinguished by their diversity of topics, wide coverage, abundance, and rich visual background. The documentaries created by the studio's filmmakers cover all aspects of the region's life, and it is difficult to imagine any field, corner of life, or problem that has not been addressed by them. In this sense, the studio has become a true encyclopedia of the region's life. Its films serve as an unparalleled mirror of the people's concerns and hardships, national and universal values, daily struggles, emotional state, and aspirations.

Most of the films are dedicated to eliminating negative phenomena such as the Aral crisis, environmental disasters and their consequences, negative events affecting people's health and lives due to these ecological catastrophes, damage to the flora and fauna of the Aral Sea region, and water problems. They highlight the efforts of our government and the First President to eliminate the Aral tragedy on a global scale and to raise international awareness about this crisis. In addition, many films also showcase the beauty and unique features of Karakalpakstan's nature.

Among the films dedicated to the consequences of the Aral Sea tragedy and related ecological disasters are: "Aral Kum" (Aral Sands, 1987, S. Yeremenkov, O. Abdurakhmanov), "Daryo Qayghusi" (The River's Distress, 1990, T. Abdreymov), "Chol va Dengiz" (The Old Man and the Sea, 1993, P. Kaipov), "Aral – Dardim Mening" (Aral – My Sorrow, 1995, O. Abdirakhmanov), "Aral Qandayin Edi" (How Great Was the Aral, 1997, O. Abdirakhmanov), "Aral – Umidlar Orali" (Aral – Island of Hopes, 1998, T. Kalimbetov), "Qushlar Bozori" (The Bird Market, 2003, O. Abdurakhmanov), "Quduq" (The Well, 2003, T. Kalimbetov), "Fidoyilar" (The Devoted, 2005, T. Kalimbetov), "Mo'ynoqqa G'oz Keldi" (Geese Have Come to Moynaq, 2006, D. Abdimuratov), "Daryo Dengizga Quyimogi Darkor" (The River Should Flow to the Sea, 2010, M. Nizanov), and "Aral Yashashi Lozim" (Aral Must Live, 2011, T. Kalimbetov, A. Aknazarov).[6]

These films depict the ecological tensions and imbalances connected to the Aral tragedy, showing its harmful consequences on the environment, the region's flora and fauna, and presenting these disasters in a poignant manner.

For example, "Aral Kum" and "Aral – Dardim Mening" condemn the destructiveness towards nature and careless attitudes to environmental health during the authoritarian regime based on administrative commands, and criticize the imprudent aspects of planning. In works like "Chol va Dengiz" and "Daryo Qayghusi," the ecological disaster that has become the people's endless pain, and the detrimental impact of drought on the population are presented; films like "Qushlar Bozori," "Mo'ynoqqa G'oz Keldi," and "Aral – Umidlar Orali" reflect the impact of the tragedy on the Aral region's flora and fauna, efforts to preserve the natural balance, the government's actions to save small lakes such as Sudoche in the Aral area, state care for Moynaq district residents' health, spending and construction works to preserve ecological balance, and so on.

"Dayro Dengizga Quyimogi Darkor" and "Aral Yashashi Lozim" present scientific evidence on the necessity and importance of saving the Aral Sea, showing, with convincing visuals, the suffering of the population due to water shortages and the ecological crisis, as well as the dangers arising from the construction of Rogun Dam without international expertise and its potentially disastrous future consequences. "Aral Qandayin Edi" fully covers the never-ending pain of the Karakalpak people – the drying Aral Sea's past and present, striving to warn future generations from this tragedy. The film "Fidoyilar" tells the story of true devotees trying to save the motherland from becoming a desert and from rising "salt rains" from the dried seabed, through creating sand dunes, planting saxaul forests and highly salt-tolerant plants brought from abroad (such as Ghalyaf and Disticklist from Mexico) in the dried Aral seabed to prevent the union of the Karakum and Kyzylkum deserts and to stop the transformation of the land into a deserted, lifeless place.

Currently, the Aral tragedy is becoming not only a national, but a global disaster, as our First President has spoken from the world's most prestigious tribunes, drawing global attention to the crisis at key United Nations sessions (the 48th session on September 28, 1993; the Assembly on the 50th anniversary on October 24, 1995; and the Millennium Summit on September 8, 2000), with meetings of Central Asian leaders and presidents dedicated to Aral issues (international conference in Nukus in August 1992, treaty in Kyzylorda in March 1993), and through the establishment of the Aral Fund. The heads of state met six times (in Tashkent on July 13, 1993; in Nukus on January 14, 1994; in Ashgabat on July 18, 1994; in Tashhovuz on March 3, 1995; in Kyzylorda on April 11, 1996; in Almaty on February 27, 1997) to discuss this problem, which is episodically reflected in the abovementioned documentaries, as well as in many issues of the annual "Karakalpakstan" newsreels produced by the studio. For example, a special issue of the "Karakalpakstan" newsreel dedicated to the visit of the presidents of Central Asian states to Nukus was titled "The Honored Step of the Presidents" in 1994. Later newsreel materials have also paid special attention to this topic, covering it chronologically. All of this is clear testimony that the situation around the Aral has become a global disaster, recognized worldwide, and the work and efforts of our state and Presidents in this direction are an example of unparalleled care for the peoples of the region and Uzbekistan, and a symbol of hope for the future of the nation.

The documentaries and chronicle films of "Karakalpakfilm" dedicated to these urgent issues remain relevant today and will continue to be important in the future as a reflection of these efforts. That is why some of these films have received high recognition at various world film forums. For example, the film "Gum-Gum" won the Grand Prix at the film festival in San Francisco, USA, in 1990; the documentary "How Great Was the Aral" was awarded the Soros Foundation Prize in 1998; "Quduq" ("The Well") received a "Silver Crescent" award at the Bilbao Festival (Spain, 2005) and a silver medal at the Netherlands Film Festival; and "Fidoyilar" won the "Silver Bear" Grand Prix at the film festival held in Spain.[7]

These works are evidence that the "Karakalpakfilm" studio team strives to promote the political course pursued by our Presidents and our state to our people and at the international level, to educate future generations in the spirit of love for the Motherland and loyalty to their native land, and to warn everyone about the ecological crisis that has occurred in the region.

The Republic of Karakalpakstan differs from other regions of Uzbekistan in its unique nature, flora, and fauna. In order to preserve the diversity of our country's wildlife, protect nature, value water, ensure biological balance, and systematically instill in our youth knowledge about our region's animal world, the reasons for the disappearance of certain species, and ways to protect them, the studio's creators are conducting research in various directions.

In recent years, many new films on this topic have been shot by the studio's filmmakers. Films that depict the nature of Karakalpakstan and its unique features include: "Karakalpak Marble" (1997, A. Sultanov), "Native Land" (2000, A. Abdiev), "Hunters" (2002, T. Kalimbetov), "Face to Face with Nature" (2003, A. Abdiev), "The Trapper" (2005, T. Kalimbetov), "Sur" (2005, M. Nizanov), "Stars of Ustyurt" (2005, K. Davletyarov), "Waters Begin High Up" (2006, M. Tovmuratov), "Nature of Our Land" (2008, A. Sultanov), "Kora Vimbet Salts" (2010, M. Nizanov), "Treasure" (2010, B. Boymurzaev), "The Taxidermist" (2010, T. Kalimbetov), "Medicinal Plants" (2011, B. Boymurzaev), "Koratereng" (2014, B. Boymurzaev)[6], and others. These films are dedicated to the uniqueness and characteristics of the land of Karakalpakstan.

Indeed, the territory of Karakalpakstan is distinguished from other parts of Uzbekistan by its nature, animal and plant world. On the one hand, there are oases covered with agriculture and plants, on the other hand, there are treeless deserts, and third, there are vast sandy and dune deserts. Therefore, these films act as a special mirror of the Karakalpak land and its cinematic description. In particular, in the films "Native Land," "Nature of Our Land," and "Face to Face with Nature," a broad picture of the Karakalpak land is shown; in "Stars of Ustyurt," thoughts are expressed about the role of the Ustyurt plateau, its flora and fauna, its natural riches, its abundance of gas and oil fields, and the necessity of its future exploration. In "Hunters," "The Trapper," and "The Taxidermist" issues such as the relationship between man and nature and careful treatment of nature are raised. "The Taxidermist" widely covers the activities of Bozorboy Umarov, the first Karakalpak taxidermist who prepared animal specimens from species now included in the "Red Book" and donated them to regional museums. This teaches future generations to treat nature with care, to protect beauty, to be vigilant and to cultivate a love for the animal world, which is our friend. In the film "Treasure," the abundance of unique resources in the Kyzylkum desert, and the life and activities of shepherds producing various types of karakul pelts for the country are depicted. In the film "Medicinal Plants," the Karakalpak land's richness in medicinal plants, of which more than 360 species exist in the region and over 200 are currently used in the chemical-pharmaceutical industry, is vividly portrayed. "Koratereng" tells the story of the lake named "Koratereng," located in the Takhtakupir district of the Republic of Karakalpakstan. This lake is the pride not only of Takhtakupir residents but of the entire republic. The film discusses the reasons for its name, the life of the fishermen who live there, and the legends and stories associated with the lake. The film "Kora Vimbet Salts" pays attention to the "Koravimbet" salt mine, one of the natural resources of Karakalpakstan. The film provides interesting information about the salt mine, particularly about the benefits of edible salt for human health; it also provides evidence of patients coming to bathe in its healing waters and being cured of various ailments. The uniqueness of this salt compared to other mines is its natural iodization.

Conclusion: The above-mentioned documentaries that showcase the Aral Sea tragedy and the unique features of Karakalpakstan's nature have deep spiritual and social significance. Such films serve to inform the world of the disasters suffered by our people as a consequence of the ecological catastrophe in the Aral region, especially highlighting the great harm that has been done to the region's flora and fauna due to environmental

disaster and water shortage, and showing how these have brought great calamities upon the lives of the people in the area.

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