

## A Glance at the History of Musical Theater Dramaturgy

*Pirmatov Muzaffar Sherzodovich*

*Uzbekistan State Institute of Arts and Culture, "Art studies and cultural studies" associate professor of the department*

**Annotation:** This scientific article notes the significant importance of musical theatre dramaturgy. It also addresses our achievements in this area and the problems that need to be tackled in the future. The relevance of this topic is emphasized by our statehood history, rich past, and culture, as well as the spiritual essence of our great ancestors, which find comprehensive expression through today's theatrical art, fulfilling the demands of the era.

**Keywords:** Performance, dramaturgy, melody, tradition, creativity, execution, nation, music."

"There is a lot of information about the development of the 'People's Theater' and dance art in Central Asia since ancient times. However, recent research by scholars indicates that the art of interest in the development of the 'People's Theater' is derived from the stage art of the Hellenistic period. These examples testify to the rich oral-artistic tradition and the existence of numerous diverse epic works among the peoples of Central Asia."

The peoples of Central Asia made significant contributions to the culture and art of the ancient world. Archaeological excavations in the region have unearthed numerous examples of scientific and technological advancements, architectural achievements, visual and sculptural arts, oral and written literature, music, and dance, all testament to a rich cultural heritage. During the Samanid era (9th-10th centuries), the Karakhanid period (11th-12th centuries), and the Khorezm Shahdom (11th-13th centuries), there was a renewed flourishing of science, literature, history, and art, with a notable interest in Greek and Arab cultures and intellectual traditions. Inter-state trade and craftsmanship thrived. Secular sciences and Islam developed in tandem, fostering new discoveries. This period produced numerous renowned scientists and thinkers who gained international recognition.

In Central Asia, traditional folk theaters such as comedic performances, improvisational skits, mime, and puppet shows, deeply rooted in the culture since ancient times, continued to thrive creatively despite prohibitions imposed by feudal khans and religious authorities. These performances featured clowns, comedians, and puppet shows, utilizing elements of Uzbek folk traditions like storytelling contests ("aytishuv"), improvisational dialogues ("lapar"), and songs ("yallalar"). Prior to performances, musical ensembles featuring instruments like the "karnay" (a type of long trumpet), "surnay" (a type of oboe), "nogora" (a double-sided barrel drum), and "doira" (a tambourine) would perform. While the creation of comedic and farcical stage works by this comedic theater, their performances in public spaces like marketplaces, the development of characters and types, the integration of speech with movement, the adoption of theatrical costumes, makeup, and masks, and the participation of three to fifteen actors shared some similarities with European theater, the structure and stage design differed significantly.

Musical drama initially developed in countries like Italy, Germany, and Russia. However, European-style theater arrived in Turkestan in the second half of the 19th century. For instance, in 1891, Lassalle's operetta troupe arrived from Paris. In 1894, an opera and ballet theater from Tiflis (Tbilisi) toured, performing operas such as "Aida," "Faust," "The Demon," "The Daughter of the Cardinal," "Carmen," "Ivan Susanin," "La Traviata," and "The Queen of Spades." Russian drama theaters frequently toured Turkestan, regularly staging plays like "Woe from Wit" (Griboyedov), "The

Inspector General” (Gogol), “Krechinsky’s Wedding” (Sukhovo-Kobelin), “A Dowerless Girl” and “The Thunderstorm” (Ostrovsky), “Intrigue and Love” (Schiller), and works by Shakespeare, Gorky, and Chekhov.

These tours initially aimed to satisfy the cultural and aesthetic needs of the Russian population in Turkestan. However, the local population also benefited, fostering a growing desire among them to establish a national theater. Furqat, one such intellectual, became closely acquainted with Russian democratic intellectuals in Tashkent and Samarkand during the 1890s. He familiarized himself with Russian cultural life, including gymnasiums, scientific societies, newspapers, magazines, theaters, and concert organizations. Furqat published an article in a newspaper comparing the Russian theater with the Uzbek “Masxaraboz” (clown) theater, noting: “Having visited the Russian theater many times, I observed their plays and acting styles. Their performances and artistry are not for mere mockery and laughter, as with our clowns, but rather for edification.”

The quote describes a style of theater that realistically portrayed the lives, hardships, and challenges of people in the past. While some performances were comedic, they also offered moral lessons, all while maintaining a high standard of decency, free of vulgarity. Furqat’s numerous articles and poems about theater reveal his strong belief in the potential growth of Uzbek theater and music. This belief was quickly realized as Jadid intellectuals soon produced a large number of dramatic works. M. Rahmonov’s book, “Hamza and Uzbek Theater,” highlights this period, naming key Jadid playwrights who contributed significantly to this dramatic upswing: Behbudiy, Nusratulla Qudratulla, Abdulla Badriy, Haji Muin Shukrullo (Mehr), A. Samadov, and Abdulla Avloniy, among others.

In a short time, these playwrights produced numerous original plays of varying lengths for the newly forming Jadid theaters. The passage lists several examples: “Patricide” (Behbudiy), “Confidantes” (A. Samadov), “The Suffering Woman,” “A Victim of Young Love,” “Poppy,” “The Judge and the Mullah” (Haji Muin Shukrullo), “The Wedding” (Nusratulla Qudratulla), “The Young Man’s Deception,” “The Step-father,” “The Rich Child,” “Happiness Ended,” “The Fool,” “Welcome; Farewell” (Abdulla Badriy), “Is Being a Lawyer Easy?” (Abdulla Avloniy), and “The Unfortunate Groom” (Abdulla Qodiri).

Mahmudkhudja Behbudiy’s play “Patricide,” written in 1911, premiered in Samarkand in 1913, staged by his own amateur theater troupe. The Azerbaijani director Aliaskar Askerov directed this tragic play. The troupe toured Andijan, Kokand, Namangan, Tashkent, Kattaqurgon, and Bukhara. Influenced by Russian, Azerbaijani, and Tatar theaters, other theater groups emerged in various cities, often beginning their repertoire with Behbudiy’s “Patricide.”

Azerbaijani musical theater played a crucial role in the development of musical theater in Turkestan. Beginning in 1914, touring Azerbaijani musical theater companies performed operas such as “Leyli and Majnun” (based on Nizami Ganjavi’s version) and “Asli and Karim,” and musical comedies like “Arshin Mal Alan” and “May He Not Die, But Let This One Die,” captivating audiences. These cultural exchanges between Turkestan and Russian, Tatar, Azerbaijani, and other cultures positively influenced Uzbek intellectuals, writers, poets, and artists in the areas of literature, music, and theatrical arts.

Inspired by Azerbaijani musical dramas, G’ulam Zafari embarked on creating a national musical drama. His “Halim”<sup>a</sup>, considered the first Uzbek musical drama, premiered in 1919 and has been performed by both professional and amateur theater groups for many years since.

As theater scholar T. Tursunov correctly points out, even in the early stages of the Uzbek national theater movement (1910-1917), G’ulam Zafari’s adaptations of “small operas” played a significant role in the development of the Uzbek professional musical drama theater. This movement was heavily influenced by Russian democratic musical and theatrical culture, as well as by the Azerbaijani

professional musical drama theater. The widespread growth of amateur theatrical groups also contributed significantly to the emergence of a professional Uzbek musical drama theater, in addition to the plans of Hamza Hakimzoda Niyoziy.

It's important to note that, from the very beginning of the theater movement, the genres of drama and musical drama began to emerge. As the drama genre developed, musical drama also began to take shape. Hamza, one of the founders of Uzbek theater, incorporated music and songs into his dramatic works and created a number of musical adaptations. G'ulam Zafari, another founder of the musical drama genre in Uzbekistan, continued to write small musical adaptations and ultimately created the first musical drama in Uzbek theater, "Halim" (1919). This historically significant work, with all its achievements and shortcomings, played a major role in the development of the Uzbek musical drama genre.

The play addresses important contemporary social issues. Specifically, it dramatically portrays the helplessness of young people in controlling their own destinies, depicting the complete power of parents in arranging marriages, and the resulting unhappiness of young people. The play depicts not only the tragic love of the main characters but also the difficult life of the people. Therefore, at the suggestion of director Mannon Uygur, scenes of matchmaking and a wedding were added to the beginning and end of the play.

The matchmaking scene specifically highlights the destructive power of this tradition. It was crucial for the director and the theater company to show that women primarily handled matchmaking. Therefore, when Kholjon and Norhola try to arrange Halima's marriage to Ortiqboy, they are indifferent to the fate of the sixteen-year-old Halima, considering it a normal occurrence. Custom and tradition had rendered people apathetic. Mannon Uygur sharply criticizes this apathy and outdated customs. The score was later composed by Sh. Shoumarov and V.A. Uspensky. This production, refined and enriched over the years, developed its own traditions and served as a model for other classic works of traditional musical theater.

Inspired by and building upon the experience of "Halim", poet and playwright Khurshed also sought to create a musical drama. Based on the epic poem of Navoi and folk legends, he created "Farhod and Shirin" in 1919. This work premiered at the "Coliseum" theater in Tashkent in 1922, directed by Khurshed, Sh. Shoumarov, and Yu. Qurbonov. Shoraxim Shoumarov selected the music from Uzbek folk and maqom melodies. The ensemble included Sh. Shoumarov (doira), I. Ikromov (ghijjak), Qurbonkhon (du'ar), Yu. Rajabiy (nay), and R. Rajabiy (tanbur). The roles of Farhod, Shirin, Mohinbonu, and Yosumon were played by S. Karimov, Sayidazim Usmonov, Umarjon Ismailov, and Vali Usmonov, respectively. The production consisted of 5 acts, 7 scenes, and 16 musical numbers. In 1923, "Farhod and Shirin" was restaged at the Namuna Theater with Uygur and Komol I. A. Hidoyatov and M. Qorieva played Farhod and Shirin, respectively. In 1924, "Farhod and Shirin" was again performed at the Coliseum, with Rahim Berdi Bobojonov as Farhod, M. Qorieva as Shirin, and A. Hidoyatov as Shapur.

Abro'r Hidoyatov's performances in musical plays, characterized by a blend of dignity, majesty, and passion typical of the heroes of classical Uzbek poetry and epics, and his skill in seamlessly integrating song and dialogue, contributed significantly to the improvement of subsequent productions. "Halim", a beloved performance for seventeen years, served not only as a valuable experience but also as a creative school for acting in musical drama and a foundation for future creative achievements.

These three musical plays—"Halim", "Farhod and Shirin," and "Layli and Majnun"—were pivotal in the development of Uzbek musical drama and instrumental in the founding of the Uzbekistan State Musical Theater. The theater itself originated from Muhiddin Qoriyoqubov's "Ethnographic Ensemble," initially established as the "Uzbekistan State Musical-Experimental Theater" in early 1929, later becoming the "Uzbek State Musical-Drama Theater" that November.

In the summer of 1930, the First Olympiad of National Theaters and Arts was held in Moscow. Eighteen theater troupes and fifteen ethnographic-musical ensembles participated. Among them were the Uzbek State Dramatic Theater and the Uzbek State Musical Theater. The Dramatic Theater presented “The Cotton Pickers” by Umarjon Ismailov, “Two Communists” by Komil Yashin, “The Attack” by V. Yan and Chulpon, and “Farhod and Shirin” by Sh. Khurshed. The Musical Theater showcased “Halim”a by G’ulam Zafari and “Comrades” by Komil Yashin.

In 1941, Sobir Abdulla’s “Tohir and Zuhra” premiered. The music was composed by To’xtasin Jalilov and G. Shperling. “Tohir and Zuhra” defined the creative style of the musical theater. The principal roles were played by Shahodat Rahimova, E’tibor Jalilova, Farogh’at Rahmatova, and Tursunkhon Ja’farova, as well as Mashrabjon Yunusov and Mahmudjon G’ofurov. Due to the high level of professional performance, “Tohir and Zuhra” firmly established itself in the theater’s repertoire. Its melodies and songs resonated deeply with the audience; “T’uy’lar Muborak” (“Blessings on the Wedding”) became a favorite celebratory song for brides and grooms, quickly gaining popularity and widespread recognition.

The newness of the musical drama and comedy theater provided broader opportunities for actors specializing in drama. Asad Ismatov, as Qoraboti’r, and Abduruf Boltaev, as Khan Bobokhon, gained recognition through their interpretations of the roles. The extensive use of chorus and dance showcased the unique characteristics of the musical drama genre. The production put many members of the theater company to the test in terms of performing musical drama roles.

The 1942 production of “Nurchon” was significant for its focus on historical figures. The play’s compelling narrative and well-executed musical score stood out for their depth and realism. The music for “Nurchon,” written by playwright Komil Yashin and composers To’xtasin Jalilov and Abdurakhim Sobitov, featured an ensemble of Uzbek national instruments. In 1952, the play was restaged, this time incorporating a symphonic orchestra. The story unfolds in late 1920s Margilan, highlighting the tragic fate of Nurchon Yoldoshxo’jaeva. The use of songs, yalla, arias, vocal ensembles, and mass choral numbers provides independent yet integrated musical elements. The symphonic orchestra’s accompaniment provides a narrative layer, augmenting the stage action.

The play opens with Haydar’s captivating aria and his sister Qumrixon’s lyrical song. The scene is beautifully set – the early morning, garden setting, inspired by Qumrixon’s song, creates a breathtaking atmosphere. The orchestra enhances the musical effect by mirroring the sounds of birds and nightingales, complementing the song.

The repertoire of the Uzbek Musical Theater features a significant number of musical dramas based on folk epics and fairy tales, exceeding the number of autobiographical and domestic-themed musical comedies and dramas. The popularity of these epic- and fairy tale-based performances reflects the rich tradition of oral storytelling in Uzbekistan, encompassing a vast array of epics, tales, and heroic narratives across millennia. These stories emphasize fervent patriotism and portray heroic figures, while preserving and transmitting the cultural and spiritual values of the Uzbek people across generations. Considering the widespread appeal of these epics, Uzbek playwrights and composers have created numerous musical dramas based on these themes.

While the musical dramas of the 1920s and 1930s, such as “Halim”a, “Farhod and Shirin,” “Layli and Majnun,” “Gulsara,” and “Tohir and Zuhra,” were formed on the basis of traditional Uzbek monophonic musical heritage and polyphonic works, the 1940s saw a further development of exploration in the genre. Musical dramas like “Davron Ota,” “The Sword of Uzbekistan,” “Nurchon,” “Qurban Umarov,” “Oftobkhon,” and “Muqanna,” while also rooted in folk musical heritage, increasingly incorporated polyphonic styles and symphonic orchestras. Within a short period, the national musical drama genre in Uzbekistan achieved a high level of development and refinement. These stage works integrated all the components of musical drama—literary foundation, various forms

of musical art, dance, scenic design, and stage action—resulting in a masterful synthesis that defined the key characteristics of Uzbek national musical drama.

The musical performances staged during the 1950s and 1960s prioritized aspects of acting skill, such as the skillful blending of dignity, majesty, and passion characteristic of the heroes of classical Uzbek poetry and epics, and the seamless integration of song and spoken dialogue.

## REFERENCES.

1. “Turkiston Viloyatining Gazetasi,” February 6, 1891, No. 5.
2. Rahmonov, M. *Hamza va O'zbek Teatri* (Hamza and Uzbek Theater). UzSSR State Fine Literature Publishing House, Tashkent, 1959, 82 pages.
3. Qodiriov, M.Kh. *O'zbek Teatr Tarixi* (History of Uzbek Theater). Tashkent: Ijod Dunyosi, 2003.
4. Ibragimov, O. *O'zbek Xalq Musiqasi* (Uzbek Folk Music), Vol. 1. Tashkent: Ibn Sino Publishing House, 1994.
5. Meliyev, S. “Music and Spirituality.” In *O'zbeknavo: Ustozlar, Yulduzlar, Shogirdlar* (Uzbeknavo: Masters, Stars, Students), Tashkent: Chulpon Publishing House, 2000.
6. Jabborov, A. *Musiqiy Drama va Komediya Janrlari O'zbekiston Kompozitorlarining Ijodiyotida* (Musical Drama and Comedy Genres in the Works of Uzbek Composers). Tashkent: G'.G'ulom Literature and Art Publishing House, 1999.
7. Qodiriov, M. *Tomosha San'atlari O'tmishda va Bugun* (Performing Arts in the Past and Present). Tashkent: Mumtoz So'z, 2011.
8. Fitrat. *O'zbek Klassik Musiqasi va Uning Tarixi* (Uzbek Classical Music and its History). Tashkent: O'qituvchi, 1981.
9. Mamadaliyev, F. *Milliy Musiqa Ijrochilig Masalalari* (Issues of National Music Performance). Tashkent: Yangi Asar Avlodi, 2001.
10. Abdurahmonov I.R Concept of muthologi represented in fine arts of Uzbekistan -//Azian Journal of multidimensional Research (AJMR) Impact Factor: Sijif 2020=6.882. Voll 9, Issue 10, October, 2020. P.143-147.
11. Abdurakhmonov I.R. Reflection Of Folklore in Applied Art Of Uzbekistan (From The Begining Of The XX Century To The days). 2021/2/27. The American Journal of Social Science and Education Innovations. P.166-171.
12. Abdurahmanov I.R. Category of Mythological Images in the Painting of the Independence Period. Natural Volatiles and Essential Oils (NVEO). ISSN: 2148-9637. Dec 16, 2021. Article ID: NVEO-2021- 170. 8(4): P/ 15516-15522. (Skopus).
13. Abdurahmanov I.R. He Interpretation Of Images On Dualism, Totemisv, Animism And Fetishism. The American Journal of Social Science and Education Innovations (ISSN-2689-100X). Impact Factor. 2021.5.857.P.75-81.
14. Abduvohidov F. THE ISSUE OF CREATING A REPERTOIRE IN THE THEATERS OF UZBEKISTAN (ON THE EXAMPLE OF SURKHANDARYA REGIONAL MUSICAL DRAMA THEATER). Galaxy International Interdisciplinary Research Journal 9 (12), 572-575
15. Abduvohidov F. New trends in the staging of historical works (On the example of Surkhandarya regional musical drama theater). Journal of Pedagogical Inventions and Practices 3, 79-82
16. Abduvohidov F. New Discoveries in Directory (On the example of creative activity of Surkhandarya theater) Texas Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies 3, 158-165