



## FROM THE HISTORY OF THE MUSEUMS OF KARAKALPAKSTAN

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### Abstract

The article describes the formation and development of the first museums in Karakalpakstan, the establishment of new museums and the role of their diversity in museology and tourism, as well as innovations in the field.

**Keywords:** Karakalpakstan, museum, house-museum, school museum, museum branches, museology, exhibit, exposition, renovation, museum integration.

### Introduction

Our museums, which serve as mirrors of our history, are sources of scientific development, and the foundation of intellectual growth of our people. In his Address to the Oliy Majlis, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Sh. M. Mirziyoev, said that "... it is necessary to conduct a complete search of the historical exhibits stored in the museums of our country, to create a catalog of each museum" [1]. This is the concern at the level of our state's policy aimed at carefully preserving our values, historical experiences, unique heritage passed from generation to generation, and explaining them to the youth.

The first museum in Karakalpakstan was established on May 16, 1929 in Tortkul, the first capital of Karakalpakstan [2; 3]. In the 1930s, the museum was part of the complex scientific-research institute. In 1934, it was separated and became the Museum of Local History. In 1935, it was transformed into the Karakalpakstan History and Local History Museum [3; 367]. Due to the flooding the museum was relocated to Nukus in 1944. In 1959, after the establishment of the Karakalpakstan branch of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan the museum was transferred to the care of this branch. By 1965, it had moved to a two-story building in the city center previously occupied by the Karakalpakstan branch of the Academy of Sciences. In 1969, the museum underwent reorganization and became the Karakalpakstan State Museum of Local History.

One of the most unique exhibits of the museum is a Capitel found in 1966 in the mountains of Sultanuizdag. This Mramor-made Capitel dates back to the 5th-4th centuries BC and attracts special attention from the museum's audience. The mock-ups of the "Toprak kala" castle and the "Koykirilgan kala" castle, household items,





weapons of Labor indicate the lifestyle of the people of that time. Many are interested in the tombstone of Narinjan, the dutor of our grandfather Berdak, the sceptre of the Ajiniyaz Kosibay ugli, the famous blue dress of karakalpak women, the white jacket "Ak jegde", the caps of birds and animals listed in the red book, birds and animals facing extinction, petrified wood with a history of 40 thousand years, and other non-noble exhibits [5].

Based on the decision of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan on December 11, 2017 "On approval of the program of comprehensive measures to improve the activities of state museums and strengthen the material and technical base in 2017-2018", the Karakalpak State Local History Museum, which has been serving the history and works of art of our people for almost 90 years, has been named after the State Museum of history and culture of the Republic of Karakalpakstan. The museum's collection, which began its activities with 20 exhibits, has reached 80,754 units to date. More than 400 of these are unique exhibits.

In 1966, the Karakalpak State Art Museum was opened in Nukus. The museum was named after its first director I.V. Savitsky in 1984. The museum stores 7,452 paintings, 25,223 graphics, 1,322 sculptures, 7,562 works of folk art, 1,902 coins, 8,618 results of archaeological research, a total of about 100,000 historical exhibits. The museum ranks second in the world in terms of Russian avant-garde collection after the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg. British newspaper "Guardian" in the article "Savitsky's hidden treasure" described the Karakalpak State Art Museum as one of the most beautiful museums on earth, while the former ambassador of France to Uzbekistan, Jean-Claude Richard, called the museum "Ali Baba's treasure".

Museum marketing and management requires a new type of leader, specific to the needs of the times. The leader should know not only history, archeology, art, ethnology, cultural studies, but also economics, management, marketing, sociology and tourism. This will undoubtedly have a positive effect on the development of museums.

On the basis of the decision of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated August 28, 2018 "On measures for the innovative development of the sphere of culture and art of the Republic of Uzbekistan", by the Fund for the Development of Culture and Art under the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Uzbekistan an international competition for the position of director of the Karakalpakstan State Art Museum named after I.V. Savitsky was organized. Participants of the competition were required to have a scientific degree in the field of fine arts and at least 4 years of experience in management. The competition was held on the basis of 2 rounds, and candidates from Germany, Russia, Kazakhstan and Karakalpakstan took part. In the





second round, Tigran Mkrtchyan, Doctor of Science, Honored Worker of Culture of the Russian Federation, won and has been heading the Museum from January 2, 2021. This was a unique innovation in the renovation of the museums of Uzbekistan [6].

The decision of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Karakalpakstan dated August 31, 1988 No. 253/8 "On the establishment of the Karakalpakstan State Museum of Military and Labor Fame in Nukus" was adopted, and this museum was named "Karakalpak State Museum of Fame" from 2011, and the museum of the Ministry of Internal Affairs ( established in 1975 on the basis of the public) began to be called the department of the Museum of Fame in the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Karakalpakstan. In the Karakalpak State Museum of Fame, there are exhibitions representing the lives and work activities of veterans, statesmen who worked selflessly in all spheres of the national economy during the years of the Second World War and later, the soldiers who were in Afghanistan, the bravery of people who helped the victims of the Chernobyl tragedy, photographs, documents, talking about the heroes of our time, paintings and other materials, about 20,000 exhibits were collected in the museum fund (currently the museum has been closed and the exhibits have been transferred to the State Museum of History and Culture of the Republic of Karakalpakstan) [7; 113].

Apart from the above-mentioned museums, museums were established in cities, districts, as well as in higher educational institutions, schools, and offices. This work began in 1977 with the opening of the Tortkul branch of the State Museum of Local History. In 1978, a public museum was established here. In 1982, a folk museum was opened in Khojaly district. In 1983, a branch of the State Museum of Local History was opened under the Republican tourist station, in 1984, a permanent exhibition on nature protection was opened at the station of young naturalists, and in 1986, a school museum was opened in Khojaly district. In the 1980s, a public museum was established in the "Uchsoy" settlement of the Moynaq district, and a museum of local history was established in the Kunghirot district.

Based on the decision of December 28, 1979, the memorial museum of statesman and writer Qasim Avezov was opened in Chimboy district. By the decision of the Council of Ministers of Karakalpakstan on April 30, 1981, hospital No. 1 of the republic was named after Orazimbet Khalmuratov, a doctor who served Uzbekistan and Karakalpakstan, a hero of labor, and his museum was established in this hospital [4; 50]. Museums operated under schools No. 5 in Beruni, No. 6 and No. 51 in Nukus [8; 35].

The home-museum of Amet and Ayimkhan Shamuratova, the talented children of the Karakalpak people, established in 1998 in the city of Nukus, has been receiving visitors





since 1999. Amet Shamuratov (1912-1953) is a famous Karakalpak writer, translator, statesman. Ayimkhan Shamuratova (1917-1993) is one of the first Karakalpak artists. She became known to people through her wonderful songs and more than 100 stage roles [9; 31]. The German magazine "Froye Welt" described Ayimkhan Shamuratova as the owner of a unique destiny, devoted to theater, stage and art, a mother who raised 7 children while losing her life partner.

In 1998, on the occasion of the 170th anniversary of the great Karakalpak poet and thinker Berdaq, the Berdaq National Museum was opened in the city of Nukus under the Karakalpak State University. Today, according to the decision of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. 206 of April 13, 2021, the State Museum of the History of Karakalpak Literature named after Berdaq was established on the basis of the Berdaq National Museum. The most valuable exhibit of the museum is the cloak worn by our grandfather Berdaq. Our grandfather's madali cloak with the length of 1 meter 22 cm, the diameter of 1 meter 20 cm, was stored by Hurliman, Berdaq's daughter. His son Karajan wore this coat when he grew up, and it was passed on to Karajan's daughter Kallikhan. From Kallikhan, the cloak was given to his son Turganbay as a gift. He died in 2010 at the age of 49, and Turganbay's husband Amangul donated this cloak to the museum in 2014 [10]

On May 5, 2015, on the occasion of the 85th anniversary of the birth of the Hero of Uzbekistan, People's Poet of Uzbekistan and Karakalpakstan, Ibrayim Yusupov, a bust of him was installed and a house-museum was opened in the territory of the poet's hometown "Tagjap" settlement [11].

On August 31, 2017, on the occasion of the Day of Repression Victims, President Sh.M. Mirziyoev, who was in the museum "Memorial of Repression Victims", said: "The struggle of our ancestors for the peace and freedom of the Motherland is a lesson for today's youth," "We need to establish branches of the museum in every region under universities and institutes. It is necessary to develop a teaching system based on a special program in school textbooks in memory of the victims of repression," he said.

On November 22, 2017, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the decision "On measures to establish the State Museum of Repression Victims' Memorial under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Repression Victims' Memorial Museums in the structure of higher education institutions in the regions." Based on the decision, a museum of memory of the victims of repression was established in the structure of Karakalpak State University named after Berdak. The official opening of the museum took place on August 28, 2018. There were 783 exhibits on the eve of the opening of the museum, but today the number of exhibits has exceeded 2,000.





The museum exposition consists of 7 sections: Section 1 - "The occupation of Central Asia by Tsarist Russia, the struggle of local people for liberty and freedom (1873-1900)"; Section 2 - "National revival movement in Turkestan, its practical directions and manifestations (1901-1917)"; Section 3 - "Establishment of Bolshevik power and the beginning of repression policy (1917-1936)"; Section 4 - "The Great Massacre of 1937-1938"; Section 5 - "Political repressions in 1940-1950"; Section 6 - "Repression in the 1980s, the Cotton Work Campaign"; Section 7 - "Recovery of historical justice, perpetuation of the memory of repression victims, preservation and development of national values during the years of independence (period after 1991)".

The first repression in the history of Karakalpakstan took place in 1917-1922, when representatives of the local people who fought against the Soviet government were repressed. Most of them were fired, the rest were exiled. The second repression was in 1928-1930. During these years, the Bolsheviks considered the middle-class peasants, that is, the self-sufficient part of the peasantry, and the kulaks as class enemies, and carried out a policy of forced seizure (confiscation) of their property. The third repression was aimed at destroying the spiritual wealth of our people. In 1928-1930, following the transition to the Latin alphabet in our country, the Bolsheviks pursued a policy of destroying all books and manuscripts written in the Arabic alphabet. The fourth repression took place in 1932-1933. it was transferred to the "cotton issue", that is, to force the farmers in Karakalpakstan to stop planting wheat, sorghum and other crops, which were their traditional crops, and plant cotton instead. The fifth repression was carried out in 1934-1936 due to the policy of collective farming, and the sixth repression was carried out in 1937-1938 due to the policy of the Bolsheviks to destroy Trotskyists and Bukharinists as enemies of the people. Repression continued even after the end of World War II. This was the seventh repression, in which, firstly, those who were captured in the war and returned to the country, and secondly, thousands of "collective farmers" who were accused of "failing to fulfill their norms" were exiled to Siberia [3; 237-245].

Repressive measures were also implemented during the reconstruction of the Shura government. In Karakalpakstan in the 1980s, several hundreds of people were punished regardless of whether they were guilty or not. Among them, selfless citizens serving for the well-being of our people, more than 90 republican, district and collective farm leaders were imprisoned on baseless charges [3; 326].

On the basis of the decision of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated February 28, 2017 "On additional measures for the economic development of the Moynak district of the Republic of Karakalpakstan and ensuring the employment of its population in 2017-2018", in order to widely attract tourists to the Moynak district





and the Aral Sea, as well as its long past history and nature and to deliver its fauna and flora, the traditions of the district's residents to the general public through museum exposition, funds in the amount of 1 billion 200 million soums were allocated by the subsidiary company "Urgenchtransgaz", and the new building of the museum in Moynaq district was completed. By the decision of the Cabinet of Ministers dated December 11, 2017 No. 975 "On approval of the program of comprehensive measures to strengthen the activity, material and technical base of state museums in 2017-2018", the Moynak District Ecology Museum was reorganized as a branch of the State Museum of History and Culture of the Republic of Karakalpakstan. On October 20, 2018, on the basis of the statement of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. 07/1-426 of October 6, 2018, the opening ceremony of the "Museum of Ecology" branch of the State Museum of History and Culture of the Republic of Karakalpakstan was held within the framework of the international gastronomic festival "99 different dishes from island fish".

Today, tourists from the Netherlands, Italy, Poland, the USA, Croatia, and Africa can be found in the "Museum of Ecology" in the Moynaq district [12; 21].

Based on the above-mentioned decision of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan on December 11, 2017, the "Archaeology" museum in Ellikkala district was also turned into a branch of the State Museum of History and Culture of the Republic of Karakalpakstan. This museum with more than 10,000 exhibits in Ellikkala district was established in 1989 as a branch of the Museum of Local History of the Republic of Karakalpakstan. Most of the museum's exhibits are artifacts and sculptures from ancient antiquity, the early and middle ages. One of the priceless exhibits consists of objects or wall reliefs found in the Toprakkala monument [13].

Interest in museums is developing as a result of the great attention paid to this field. In 2018, the "90th anniversary museum" organized by businessman T.Sadikov was commissioned by the administration of the Kanlikol district of the Republic of Karakalpakstan in the territory of the citizens' meeting of the "Kanlikol" settlement. All these museum expositions are made of household items and things used in our daily life, which came to our country in the 90s, the number of museum exhibits is about 1000, and the amazing thing is that no money was spent on the exhibits. Exhibits were donated by residents [12; 22].

Of course, the variety of museums is the demand of the times. Museums are not only a place of enlightenment and spirituality, but also important for domestic and foreign tourism.

Today, we are witnessing that all over the world, great attention is being paid to children's education, intellectual development, free thinking. Therefore, in





Karakalpakstan, it is necessary to organize children's museums with their own wonderful names as part of museums for adults, and even separately, and this, in turn, requires the development of museum pedagogy.

Based on the conclusions, it is recommended to pay attention to the followings: 1. Creating excursion texts adapted to children; 2. To organize museums in districts where there are no museums and create interactive museum corners dedicated to children in them; 3. Development of archive, library and museum integration; 4. Museum and film integration: organization of film premieres in museums about our history and values; 5. Printing of postcards, booklets, road signs, albums, catalogs with unique exhibits from the museum funds of Karakalpakstan; 6. Developing marketing, attracting foreign tourists and improving high cultural service.

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