



Organization Of Leisure In The Cities Of Karakalpakstan In 1960-1980

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ABSTRACT

Organization of leisure of the population in the cities of Karakalpakstan in 1960-1980 is analyzed in the article as well as the meaning of the 'leisure' term is determined.

The cultural leisure of townspeople was sufficiently divorced. The organization of the leisure was based not only on the party and state directions, but on active amateur involvement of the population groups in cultural life of the regions. Development of city infrastructure and increase of living standards of the population required improvement in all fields of industry and livelihood of the society.

The peculiarity of leisure organization for Soviet citizens is uncovered in the article. It differs by its ideological purpose and intention to involve citizens into achievement of the goals stated by the government for the industrial enterprises.

The methodology of the research is based on local materials. In this research we focused on specifics and problems of leisure and recreation activities of Karakalpak region during the studied period of time.

The scientific novelty of the research is that the research of the leisure and recreation activities within the period from 1960's to 1980's has been studied for the first time in Karakalpakstan. The social problems of the region and ways to solve these problems by the government of the Republic were studied on the basis of statistic data, archives and articles of that period.

KEYWORDS

Leisure of the population, clubs, houses of culture, palaces of culture, theaters, TV broadcast, radio, recreation.

INTRODUCTION

Cities in the history of mankind are one of the most progressive types of settlements, representing complex and multifaceted organisms in which socio-demographic, economic, cultural, ethnic and other processes interact. With the industrialization of society and the formation of the urban way of life, there was a selection and development of leisure activities sphere, a mass culture was formed, to which all segments of the urban population were included by the middle of the 20th century.

The concept of 'leisure' should be defined before proceeding to the presentation of the urban population leisure problems in Karakalpakstan.

Historian, S.Yu. Malysheva mentions about the origin of the concept notes that the idea of leisure as a 'recreation time', 'idle time' is associated with technological, economic and cultural changes of the XIX century, which led to the transition to the industrial epoch.

THE MAIN RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Development of the industries, division and organization of labor destroyed the monopoly, distinctive for traditional societies of a common time-cycle of work and leisure alternation stimulated the delineation of these

two spheres and contributed to the emergence of the 'category of idle time' that is most important for modernization discourse (Malysheva, 2014).

Reflecting further, she came to the conclusion that: '... during the second half of the XIX - beginning of the XX century, in parallel with the process of differentiation of work and rest spheres in the language, the semantics of concepts denoting leisure and idleness gradually changed... These seemingly insignificant movements at first glance indicated milestones in the formation of mass urban leisure as an independent sphere of activity, where the business activity of various strata of the population was directed and where representatives of these strata were rushing to search for new sensations, impressions, and knowledge' (Malysheva, 2014).

Club cultural institutions (houses and palaces of culture), theaters, cinemas, museums, radio and television played an important role in the organization of the population leisure in the cities. These cultural organizations, carrying out cultural and educational work among the population, created conditions for self-realization, for creative and social activities. In general, the above-mentioned forms of leisure formed a special social and information space, intended both for the physical and spiritual development of people, as well as for

ideological and educational work among various categories of the population. People became active creators of the culture of that epoch and carriers of political 'advanced ideas and ideals' by participating in cultural and educational events of club organizations, theaters and museums.

In the 1960s, radio became one of the elements of leisure. The first radio station in Karakalpakstan appeared in the 1930s, and initially it had six radio nodes. By 1970, the radio network existed in all villages of Karakalpakstan. These years a humorous radio journal was the most popular broadcast among all radio listeners regardless of age. Particularly interesting programs were broadcasted on Saturdays and Sundays. People listened to the theatrical performances broadcasted with great interest. Most common broadcast was a very popular musical drama radio show 'Aigul-Abat' by Zholmurza Aimurzayev staged according to Abdiraman Utepov's play 'Tenintapkankyz'. (Bekmuratova, 1970).

By 1985 more than 96% of the population had radios. Network of radio broadcasting in the rural areas developed significantly these years. Transmissions were conducted in Karakalpak, Uzbek, Russian and Turkmen languages by this time (History of the Karakalpak Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, 1986).

Cinema became a typical form of cultural rest for townspeople. In 1960 there were about 120 film installations in the republic (Karakalpaks, 1962). The number of cinemainstallations serving for urban and rural spectators increased from 260 to 300 in 1970-1975, and by 1989 it increased to 413.

The Karakalpak cinematography started to emerge by the early 1960s. The first picture 'Fishermen of the Aral Sea' reflecting Karakalpak people's life was created according to the scenario of Zhapakov N. and Melkumov M. A newsreel item was opened in Nukus, (Karakalpaks, 1962).

Nukus branch of Tashkent film studio of popular science and documentary films was opened in 1970. In December 1989, Karakalpakfilm studio was established on the basis of the Karakalpak branch of 'Uzkinochronica'studio. Films such as 'Gum-gum', 'Nepokornaya', 'Aral-kum', 'Year of the snake'were introducedto public by the end of the 1980s in the history of the Karakalpak cinema art.

Karakalpak national television emerged in 1964. The construction of Nukus television center was completed in 1967, and by the next year a mobile television station was built. Starting from 1971 Moscow and Uzbek television programs were broadcasted. In 1976-1980 so called 'radio and television days of the regions'broadcasts came into life and were firmly established in the practice of everyday television and radio programs. Thematic TV and radio programs began to cover not only agriculture, industry, construction and other branches of material production, but also the spiritual sphere such as culture, science, literature, art and public education. By 1985 more than 96% of the population of Karakalpakstan had TV sets.

Theatre performances and concerts became the increasingly widespread forms of cultural leisure.The Karakalpak State Theaterthat was formed in 1930 (since 1937 named as 'Karakalpak State Theater named after

Stanislavsky’), from the very beginning of its existence performed not only in Nukus, the capital of the republic, but also went on tour to the regional theaters and collective farms, as well as to the most remote corners of the republic to the Aral Sea fishermen, livestock breeders of Kyzylkum and Ustyurt. They staged not only Karakalpak dramatists’ plays, but also other plays by Gogol, Ostrovsky and Vishnevsky translated into Karakalpak language.

There were 194 art amateur talent groups in the republic in 1961. They were attended by about 5,000 art lovers such as collective farmers, workers, students, employees, and others. These clubs performed with concerts and productions, and served as one of the main bases for the theater personnel training. The Republican House of Folk Art and two popular theaters rendered great assistance to the amateur groups (Karakalpaks, 1962).

There were eight folk theaters and ensembles and more than 900 amateur art groups functioning in Karakalpakstan by the 1970s and 1980s.

Theater performances were getting popular over time. There were many plays by local authors devoted to modernity. The musical comedy ‘Taluas’ by Khodzhanizayov S., ‘Zhaylaudatoi’ (Wedding in the pasture) by N. Eshmatov and R. Eshimbetov and others were very popular (Bekmuratova, 1970).

The creation of the Theater of the young spectator (TYuZ) named after S. Khodzhanizayov was an important event in the theatrical life of Karakalpakstan in 1978. The theater of the young spectator performed the plays based on the works of Y. Mahmudov ‘The

Naked King’, I. Yuzeyev ‘The Joke, fraught with misfortune’, Rakhmanov K. ‘Belated Spring’, T. Seytzhanova ‘The Nukus Legend’, M. Yakhyaeva ‘Regret’ at the appropriate level.

During this period there was an aspiration to express national identity and propaganda of the national culture of the republic: in 1984 there were Culture Days of Karakalpakstan in Dagestan, and in 1985 several contests were held: bakhsy-zhyrau, family ensembles. Creative collectives such as State Philharmonic vocal and choreographic ensemble ‘Kyrykkyz’, State Song and Dance Ensemble ‘Aikulash’ and the ensemble ‘Amu Tolkyuny’ successfully toured in many cities of Siberia, Far East, Krasnoyarsk Territory, and Uzbekistan (CSA RK. F.173, inventory 3/1, file 46).

The number of cultural and educational institutions increased every year: in 1961 there were 227 institutions, in 1964 - 237, and in 1965 - 248. In 1961 there were 283 mass libraries, and in 1965 the number increased to 317 (A Brief Statistical Compilation, 1966). In 1969 there were 489 clubs in the republic, and made a growth of 34 clubs over three years. They conducted a large cultural and mass, political educational work among the republic population. Organization of evenings and entertaining events were the most active directions for club establishments. The evening programs included performances, concerts, talks, lectures, quizzes, games and dancing. Accordingly, there were 4,482 events held, such as thematic evenings, debates, conferences, oral journals including evenings on ‘Dear Fathers’, ‘The Most Human Man’, ‘The Lenin’s Course into the bright future’ and attracted 162,500 listeners.

There were 4,136 lectures and reports held with an audience of 34,600 people. In particular, there were 1,360 lectures and reports conducted on social and political topics covering 106,800 people, 1,530 reports on industrial and agricultural topics with the outreach of 151,000 people.

The clubs faced significant problems during the entire period studied. Shortage of qualified employees was only one part of overall complex problems. The other problems listed premises, technical equipment and material base of the clubs: shortage of musical instruments, paints, plywood, paper, tables, chairs and cultivators (CSA RK, Fund 173, Inventory 1, File281).

Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that the houses and palaces of culture acted not only as social translators of cultural codes, moral-ethical norms and social rules, but also as the development regulators for the socio-cultural life in certain regions of the country.

The organization of leisure for the Karakalpakstan population as one of the most important directions of cultural and educational work occurred to be the part of the social order for cultural institutions in 1960-1980. The fulfillment of the abovementioned tasks was particularly significant during the years of Khrushchev's 'thaw' (1953-1964), when the state first drew attention to acute social problems of people and their unsatisfactory financial situation, low level of access to cultural goods, weak and poor art services in remote areas of the country.

The conditions for organizing the population's leisure changed qualitatively in the 1960s due to internal changes in the country. During this

period the socio-economic development of the country allowed to restore and expand the network of cultural institutions (houses and palaces of culture). In addition, an important factor that brought some progress in this area was the decision of the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU about the general reduction of the working day and the working week (Gunzburg, 1966). The average fixed working day in the USSR for adult industry workers changed from 7.96 hours in 1956 to 6.93 hours in 1961 (National Economy of the USSR, 1962). As it was noted at the session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR in May 1960, 'a characteristic feature of the transition to a shorter working day in our country is that the worker wins not only because he works an hour less and his wage does not decrease, but, ingeneralit increases'(Materials of the fifth session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, 1960).

Thus, during the period studied the time for rest of Soviet citizens was legislatively increased for 1 hour, and the preservation of the old salary and its general increase motivated citizens to expand their leisure activities. This circumstance intensified the process of organizing leisure and its cultural space both in Karakalpakstan and other particular republics.

A certain work was carried out in the republic to prepare the organization of a mass recreation of workers.

The resolution of the Central Committee of the CPSU 'On measures to improve the use of club and sports facilities' noted that 'the culture and recreation parks play an important role in the organization of the productive leisure for workers and other segments of the population. They are used to conduct days of recreation for

enterprises' collectives, to organize popular public holidays and festivals, sports competitions and performances of brass bands. However, parks did not fully meet the needs of the population either in culture or in rest. The Central Committee of the party had emphasized the need to increase the exactingness to the leading employees for the organization of meaningful leisure for people. The work effectiveness of club institutions and sports facilities should manifest itself in the upbringing of a person with high ideological conviction, communist morality, ready for high-performance work and for the Motherland defense' (Party attention to party institutions, sports facilities, 1985).

The resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Karakalpak SSR as of April 19, 1977, No. 137 'On the summer recreation of children in 1977' was adopted. A special commission was set up in the city of Nukus in order to improve the organization of summer holidays for workers. The Commission developed a plan and measures for the improvement of recreation areas. There are two parks of culture and recreation 'Leninist Komsomol' and '30th anniversary of Victory', two ponds: 'Komsomolskoye Lake' and 'Grachevaya Grove' in the city. Beach layout was made on 'Komsomolskoye Lake' and 'Grachevaya Roshcha' ponds. Two dredgers have been operating for these purposes since last summer. There are also locker rooms, canopies and pavilions. A boat station was built on Komsomolskoye Lake. Gorbyskombinat purchased boats for organizing the rental services for the population. Most landscaping works such as irrigation ditches and territory cleaning, additional planting of trees and flower beds have been completed in the parks of the city (CSA RK, F. № 177. Inv. 3, f. 49).

The Aral Sea was the main recreational and mass recreation place for workers in the Autonomous Republic. For eight kilometers along the shore of the Aral Sea there were located a beach for the urban population of Muynak, a republican pioneer camp 'Rakhat' of the Ministry of Education of the Uzbek SSR, where 1200 children annually recreated, the pioneer camp Orlyonok of the Muynak fish cannery, the fish farm of the Uzbek SSR, where 450 children relaxed each year and the Sputnik pioneer camp of the Central Asia-Center gas pipeline management, where 480 children rested annually. Rest House 'Aral Seashore' of the Uzbek Residency for the management of health resorts of trade unions, sanatorium 'Muynak' of the 4th main department of the Ministry of Health of the Uzbek SSR, recreation center for railway workers of the Central Asian Railway (CSA RK, F. № 177. Inv. 3, F.49).

The cultural leisure time of the citizens during Soviet times was quite diverse and included visits to the museums and to the main city centers which existed in large cities and regional centers of the republic. The state laid great store on the creation of museums that were the custodians of historical memory. With the aim to promote the historical past and restore cultural heritage among the population, there were initiated such actions as lectures and conversations on 'Our Land 1000 Years Ago' and 'Our Region', there were prepared programs about ancient cities and memorable places in Karakalpakstan including 'Mizdahkan', 'Toprakkala', 'Big Guldursun', 'Karakum Ishan', 'Tas Hospital', 'Ishan Kala', and others (CSA RK. Fund 173, inventory 3/1, f. 78).

The Museum of Regional Studies of Karakalpakstan is one of the oldest scientific

and educational institutions not only in the lower reaches of the Amu Darya and the Aral Sea, but throughout Central Asia. It was established in 1929 in Turtkul, the former capital of the republic.

The Karakalpakstan State Museum of Art named after Savitsky is the richest collection of art of the Karakalpak people. The museum is considered to be the best in the country, and it is well known beyond borders. Its collection includes items of material culture of ancient and medieval Khorezm as well as Karakalpak folk arts and crafts. Department of Fine Arts is the largest artistic discovery. It represents not only the national art school of Karakalpakstan, but also the creations of the picturesque culture founders of Uzbekistan, who worked in Central Asia in the early twentieth century. If by the time of the opening, the museum had only 3,000 exhibits, by the end of the 1980s the number of exhibits had already exceeded 50,000 (CSA RK. Fund 173, inventory 3/1, file 46).

Thus, it can be seen that cultural institutions, despite numerous problems with the material and technical base and staffing, have done a tremendous job in organizing leisure activities for citizens using various forms, methods and means.

Party and state bodies' directness and wide amateur creative work of various population groups and their participation in the cultural life of the region made significant contributions to the organization of leisure in 1953-1964.

It is obvious, that culture institutions' activity in 1960-1980s corresponded production goals of enterprises and conformed to 'the aim to

mobilize workers' attention to fulfilling tasks of the production enterprise'. The development of urban infrastructure for industrial services influenced the nature of leisure, and "production purposefulness" determined the forms, methods and means of activity in the organization of leisure for Soviet citizens.

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