

Historical and Methodological Development of Karakalpak Literary Studies and The Significance of Kamal Mambetov's Scientific Legacy

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Abstract: This article analyzes the formation process of Karakalpak literary studies, its methodological foundations, and modern scientific paradigms. It also pays special attention to Kamal Mambetov's scientific approaches to the study of Karakalpak literature, his role in systematizing literary history, and his theoretical concepts. The research is conducted based on comparative and historical-typological approaches in literary studies.

Keywords: Karakalpak literary studies, methodology, literary history, folklore, Kamal Mambetov, scientific paradigm, Turkic literatures.

Introduction: Karakalpak literary studies is one of the important and distinctive directions of the Central Asian philological school, serving to scientifically examine the centuries-old spiritual experience, artistic thinking, and aesthetic views of the people. This field is not limited to the analysis of literary texts alone, but is also aimed at comprehensively illuminating their emergence process, historical roots, cultural environment, and connection with social consciousness. Karakalpak literature has developed as an organic synthesis of oral folk creativity and written literature, within which epic storytelling traditions, lyrical songs, historical legends, and classical poetry occupy an important place. This literature represents a significant source reflecting the people's historical memory, ethnic identity, and spiritual values. Therefore, its study is important not only as a literary-aesthetic process, but also as a broader cultural and anthropological investigation. In recent years, interdisciplinary approaches observed in world literary studies have opened new scientific horizons in the study of Karakalpak literature as well. In particular, the tendency to analyze literary phenomena in relation to

history, ethnography, linguistics, cultural studies, and sociology has been increasingly strengthening. As a result, Karakalpak literature is being reinterpreted not only as a regional phenomenon, but also as an important component of the broader Turkic literary system. Such an approach makes it possible to view the literary process not as a static phenomenon, but as a continuously developing dynamic system. It also serves as an important theoretical basis for revealing the interconnection of national literature with global cultural processes. From this perspective, the study of Karakalpak literary studies today has gained not only national but also international scientific significance. Modern Karakalpak literary studies have formed as a complex and multilayered scientific system, which is not limited to the analysis of literary texts alone. This field requires the study of literary phenomena in close connection with historical processes, cultural environment, social consciousness, and aesthetic thought. For this reason, several methodological approaches are applied in an integrated manner within Karakalpak literary studies. The historical-genetic approach is based on studying literary phenomena

within the framework of their origins and historical evolution. Through this method, the formation of literary genres, the process of their transition from folklore to written literature, as well as their connection with historical reality are identified. In the case of Karakalpak literature, this approach is important for revealing the historical stages of development of epic storytelling traditions, epic thinking, and classical poetry. The comparative method enables the comparative analysis of Karakalpak literature with other Turkic peoples, as well as with Eastern classical literatures. Through this approach, literary influences, common motifs, plot similarities, and poetic traditions are identified. As a result, the place and uniqueness of Karakalpak literature within the broader Turkic cultural space become more clearly evident. The structural approach is based on studying the literary text as an internal system. In this framework, the composition of the work, the system of characters, literary language, symbols, and motifs are analyzed in their interrelationship. This method serves not only to reveal the external content of a literary text but also its internal semantic layers. The anthropological approach interprets literature as a spiritual bridge between humans and society. Through this method, the reflection of folk mentality, customs, value systems, and ethnic identity in literary works is studied. In Karakalpak literature, this approach is particularly important, as it allows for a deeper understanding of national character and social consciousness. In general, these methodological approaches make it possible to interpret Karakalpak literary studies not merely as an aesthetic discipline, but as a broader cultural-civilizational phenomenon. As a result, literature as an object of scientific research acquires a multifaceted and interdisciplinary character. Historically, Karakalpak literary studies have developed gradually, and in each period it has been distinguished by its own scientific approaches, research objects, and methodological directions. This evolution demonstrates that literary thought has risen from a simple process of collection and classification to a more complex level of theoretical and philosophical analysis. Conventionally, it can be divided into three main stages.

The folkloristic stage is considered the earliest phase in the scientific formation of Karakalpak literary studies.

At this stage, the main focus was on collecting, recording, preserving, and initially classifying samples of oral folk creativity. Epic poems, legends, fairy tales, ritual songs, and proverbs were gathered through field expeditions and introduced into scholarly circulation. This process was of great importance not only for preserving literary heritage, but also for restoring national cultural memory. Although folklore works were not yet subjected to deep theoretical analysis during this period, they served as the primary source for the subsequent development of literary studies.

In the classical philological stage, Karakalpak classical literature became the central object of scholarly research. In particular, the works of great poets such as Ajiniyaz and Berdaq began to be studied in depth from philological and aesthetic perspectives. Researchers focused on textual analysis, revealing ideological and artistic features, and interpreting poetic style and systems of imagery. During this period, literary studies developed mainly within a philological tradition, with the text viewed as the central object of analysis. In addition, at this stage, Karakalpak literature also began to be studied comparatively with Turkic and Eastern classical literatures. Navoiy and Karakalpak literature [1] It also addresses its relations with other peoples and cultures. In the modern stage, Karakalpak literary studies are developing on the basis of new scientific paradigms. In this period, literature is interpreted not only as a text, but also as a complex cultural, philosophical, and semiotic system. Literary philosophy, text theory, intertextual analysis, semiotics, and discursive approaches are widely used. The internal meanings, symbolic layers, and cultural codes of literary works are being studied in depth. An important feature of this stage is that Karakalpak literature is analyzed within the context of global literary processes, and its place in the world literary system is being determined. As a result, literary studies are moving beyond a local framework and becoming integrated into the international academic sphere. The scientific activity of K. Mambetov is devoted to issues of the history of Karakalpak literature, its stages of formation, mutual influences and literary relations, as well as problems of literary history. He authored textbooks and manuals, including "Ancient Karakalpak Literature," in which [2] Karakalpak literary studies have historically developed step by step, and in each

period they have been distinguished by their own scientific approaches, research objects, and methodological directions. This evolution shows that literary thinking has risen from a simple process of collection and classification to a complex level of theoretical and philosophical analysis. Conventionally, it can be divided into three main stages. In the modern stage, Karakalpak literary studies are developing on the basis of new scientific paradigms. In this period, literature is interpreted not only as a text, but also as a complex cultural, philosophical, and semiotic system. Literary philosophy, text theory, intertextual analysis, semiotics, and discursive approaches are widely used. The internal meanings, symbolic layers, and cultural codes of literary works are being studied in depth. An important feature of this stage is that Karakalpak literature is analyzed within the context of global literary processes, and its place in the world literary system is being determined. As a result, literary studies are moving beyond a local framework and becoming integrated into the international academic sphere. Kamal Mambetov's scientific views have significantly enriched the theoretical and methodological foundations of Karakalpak literary studies and are considered one of the key factors that elevated it to a new scholarly stage. One of his important works is the book "Theory of Literature." [3] His research is not limited to the description of individual literary phenomena, but is aimed at forming a conceptual approach to understanding the literary system as a whole.

One of the most important aspects of Mambetov's scholarly legacy is his special emphasis on interpreting literary studies as a historical process. As a result of this approach, literary phenomena began to be viewed not as static entities, but as continuously developing historical-cultural systems. His scholarly activity led to several key theoretical and practical achievements. Literary processes were increasingly analyzed not as products of a specific period alone, but as an integral part of historical evolution. This provided a stronger scientific foundation for a more profound and systematic study of literary history. Mambetov scientifically demonstrated the organic connection between folklore and written literature, interpreting them not as separate phenomena, but as different stages of a unified cultural system. This approach

contributed to the formation of a new integrative model in literary studies. Karakalpak literature was interpreted as an important component of the Turkic literary system. In his research, Karakalpak literature was considered within the broader Turkic cultural space, and its genetic, typological, and cultural relations with the literatures of other Turkic peoples were scientifically substantiated. This has served to bring national literature into a broader civilizational context. Overall, Kamal Mambetov's scholarly legacy functions as a theoretical bridge that moves Karakalpak literary studies beyond a local research framework and connects it with the wider Turkic and global literary systems. Today, Karakalpak literary studies have formed as a complex, multilayered, and systematic academic discipline. Although its development process began with folkloristic observations, in the present stage it has reached the level of a mature scientific school in both historical and theoretical-methodological terms. In this process, special attention is given not only to the study of national literary heritage, but also to determining its place within the broader Turkic and world literary systems. Kamal Mambetov's scholarly contribution plays a particularly important role in the development of this field. His methodological views enabled literary studies to move beyond traditional philological analysis and to be approached through historical-philosophical and comparative methods. Through this, literary phenomena began to be interpreted not only as artistic texts, but also as an integral part of broader cultural and civilizational processes. Mambetov's scientific legacy created a solid theoretical foundation for Karakalpak literary studies and aligned it with modern scientific paradigms.

As a result, this field is currently evolving as an open and promising academic space for new research. In this regard, Kamal Mambetov's scientific approaches continue to serve as an important theoretical foundation not only for his own time, but also for contemporary and future research.

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