

THE ROLE OF LITERATURE IN THE ART OF STAGING

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Abstract

This article examines the use of literary sources in directing and the art of staging, the process of adapting literary works for performance, and the interrelationship between directing and literature.

Keywords

directing, dramatization, staging, literary sources, art, literature, performance, education, upbringing, aesthetic needs

The role of literature in the moral upbringing of a person and in shaping them into a well-rounded human being is significant. Throughout history, scholars and intellectuals who read extensively, pursued knowledge, and sought innovation have contributed greatly to the development of their societies. It would not be an exaggeration to say that, today, reading, acquiring knowledge, and being intellectually curious have become among the most essential yet most lacking qualities. It is well known that art is directly connected with literature. In theatre, the main source for producing a performance is the play; in music, the poem; in ceremonies, film, radio, and other forms of art, the script is central. In nearly all artistic domains, literature serves as one of the primary foundations. From the first days of training in directing - specifically, the art of staging - students are consistently required by instructors to develop a close relationship with literature. The reason is straightforward: every student specializing in directing must select a work to stage. In the process of searching for answers to the questions "What shall I stage?" and "How shall I stage it?", the student must read and study a great deal of literature. While the "how to stage" aspect is learned through exercises, training sessions, and rehearsals, the answer to "what to stage" can only be discovered through reading. As experienced teachers explain, a well-chosen work accounts for fifty percent of a director's success. A student who lacks interest in reading will struggle greatly in the field of directing, for a director creates a new artistic work by offering a literary source to the actor - the central figure of theatre or cinema. Renowned master artist, eminent director, People's Artist of Uzbekistan, Bahodir Yo'ldoshev, begins the entrance interview for his "Diydor" theatre studio by asking

applicants what books they have read. After the conversation, candidates are given a short period of time during which they must read 4–5 works. These include ten ghazals by Alisher Navoi, Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and *Richard III*, plays and stories by Abdulla Qahhor, works of Jadid playwrights, and others. Although more than one hundred young men and women wish to join the studio, only those who successfully complete the reading assignment are admitted. The success of Yo'ldoshev's productions can be attributed in large part to his profound understanding of literature. In one of his interviews, he reflects on youth:

"Our youth was spent mostly in libraries and theatres. Today's young people disperse their energy everywhere - at discos and internet clubs. I wish they would be more devoted to books. Nothing can be achieved without knowledge. Even to understand the Qur'an, one must have deep learning. If the Qur'an is on your shelf but unread, you disrespect it. As the hadith states: '*Seek knowledge from cradle to grave.*' Every year I try to reread Shakespeare. I believe Navoi should be read daily. Even reading one ghazal and reflecting on it is essential; it gives the same sense of fulfillment as reading an entire novel." Indeed, today one can often observe that many young people have begun replacing books with computers. A noteworthy example from online sources recounts an incident involving the famous director Mikhail Romm and screenwriter Maya Turovskaya regarding the film *Ordinary Fascism*:

After the film was shown across the world, preparations were made to publish a book based on it. When everything was ready for print, an unexpected ban came "from above." Romm wrote to Soviet leader Brezhnev, asking: "If millions of people have already watched the film, what is the purpose of banning the book?" He soon received a reply: "Millions may have watched the film, but they will quickly forget it. Books, however, are read - and they make people think." How should one approach reading when preparing to stage a work?

The stage is a sacred platform from which one can express inner pain, joy, feelings, and truths. Theatre, music, dance, and other artistic forms serve not only to entertain but also to educate, cultivate aesthetic appreciation, and inspire goodness. Achieving these goals requires knowledge, professionalism, dedication, and high ethical intentions.

When choosing a work to stage, several criteria must be considered:

- Its educational value
- Relevance to contemporary issues
- Dramatic potential and richness in action
- Ability to attract and sustain audience interest
- Longevity of the performance on stage

A directing student must read at least ten works per semester, select one, and begin staging it. Not only dramatic works but also non-dramatic literature - novels, novellas, fables, etc. - must be read, analyzed, and presented to the instructor. Only after approval may the student begin staging. When selecting works, a director is not limited to plays alone. Any literary genre may serve as material, provided it is adapted properly. This process is known as **insсенировка** - the dramatization of non-dramatic literary works. The term, derived from Latin, means to transform a work into a stageable form. Dictionaries define *instsenirovka* as the adaptation of a non-dramatic literary work for theatre, radio, or television, resulting in a dramatic script.

Dramatization involves:

1. Thorough reading and understanding of the work
2. Reassigning narrative descriptions to characters
3. Identifying characters and distributing text among them
4. Dividing the text into monologues and dialogues
5. Observing all dramatic and staging principles

Misinterpretation of the original meaning during adaptation may distort the work. Many stage productions have emerged in this way. For example:

- Pirimqul Qodirov's *Yulduzli tunlar* (Starry Nights)
- Said Ahmad's *Ufq* (The Horizon)
- "Kelinlar qo'zg'oloni," (The Rebellion of the Brides) originally a short story
- Abdulla Qodiriyning *O'tkan kunlar* (Bygone Days)

The works of major Uzbek writers - Abdulla Qodiriy, Pirimqul Qodirov, O'tkir Hoshimov, Abdulla Qahhor, Oybek, G'afur G'ulom, Said Ahmad - have reached the stage largely thanks to skilled dramatization techniques and continue to enrich theatre repertoires today.

At the core of art lies education. Every word uttered from the stage becomes a kind of moral law for the audience, who internalize the hero's words and draw moral strength from the performance. Therefore, every action on stage must be executed with utmost sincerity. To produce a single dramatization, one may need to read at least seven or eight works before selecting the most suitable and dynamic one. Achieving this requires extensive reading. Knowledge, learning, and intellectual curiosity remain the keys to solving problems. Therefore, in his address on the 33rd anniversary of Uzbekistan's independence, President Shavkat Mirziyoyev emphasized: "In building New Uzbekistan, we are focusing on five priority areas: establishing a high-quality education system, developing entrepreneurship, creating a fair judicial system free of corruption, radically improving healthcare, and ensuring environmental sustainability. The solution to

our problems and the answers to our questions lie only in education. The key that opens all doors is education and upbringing.” Quality education and upbringing have been identified by our country’s leadership as one of the most vital strategic priorities. In cultivating young people -fostering their love of books, encouraging intellectual development, and shaping their place in society - educators bear a tremendous responsibility.

As scholar Prof. Abdusalom Umarov notes: “Writing and books are among humanity’s greatest inventions. The destiny of books is inseparable from the destiny of humankind. Indeed, books are humanity’s written memory, a treasury of the intellectual and spiritual jewels of countless generations. The history of books is also the cultural history of nations that achieved civilization.” In this context, the roles of literature and the performing arts in preserving and revitalizing this history are invaluable.

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