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THE EVOLUTION OF MUSICAL THEATRE IN THE ERA OF MODERNISM AND ITS INFLUENCE ON CONTEMPORARY ART FORMS

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the transformation of theatrical and musical forms under the influence of modernist trends. Using historical-cultural, comparative, and analytical methods, it explores how modernism shaped the development of theatrical and musical practices in Kyrgyzstan within the broader context of contemporary art. Findings show that modernism significantly influenced theatrical art, encouraging innovative forms of expression. Twentieth-century theatre actively sought new ways to portray social and psychological realities. Modernist practitioners broke with aesthetic and dramaturgical conventions – particularly in terms of form and character typification – creating art that reflected the inner world of protagonists and new conceptions of reality. The formation of national theatre in Kyrgyzstan is directly linked to the broader trajectory of cultural development amidst socio-political transformations. For an extended period, theatrical art in

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Kyrgyzstan evolved within the framework of Soviet ideology; however, over time, the desire to comprehend and articulate national identity on stage gained prominence. By incorporating elements of folk culture and folklore, Kyrgyz theatre cultivated a distinctive style that fused traditional motifs with modern theatrical forms. Gradually, the theatre acquired an identity deeply rooted in the national character and history of the country, while simultaneously responding to shifts within the global cultural landscape. A key milestone in Kyrgyz national opera is the production of “Alymbek and Kurmanzhan”. This work dramatizes historical events and heroic figures, enabling contemporary audiences to engage with their heritage. Its performance not only preserves cultural memory but also promotes national values and fosters patriotic consciousness among younger generations.

Keywords: Stage creativity, cultural transformation, aesthetics, innovation, national identity, creative strategies, genre synthesis, artistic explorations.

MODERNİZM DÖNEMİNDE MÜZİKAL TİYATRONUN EVRİMİ VE ÇAĞDAŞ SANAT BİÇİMLERİ ÜZERİNDEKİ ETKİSİ

ÖZ

Bu çalışma, modernist eğilimlerin etkisi altında tiyatro ve müzik formlarının dönüşümünü incelemektedir. Tarihsel-kültürel, karşılaştırmalı ve analitik yöntemler kullanarak, modernizmin Kırgızistan'da tiyatro ve müzik uygulamalarının gelişimini çağdaş sanatın daha geniş bağlamında nasıl şekillendirdiğini araştırmaktadır. Bulgular, modernizmin tiyatro sanatını önemli ölçüde etkilediğini ve yenilikçi ifade biçimlerini teşvik ettiğini göstermektedir. Yirminci yüzyıl tiyatrosu, toplumsal ve psikolojik gerçeklikleri tasvir etmenin yeni yollarını aktif olarak aramıştır. Modernist uygulayıcılar, özellikle biçim ve karakter tipleştirilmesi açısından estetik ve dramaturjik geleneklerden koparak, kahramanların iç dünyasını ve yeni gerçeklik anlayışlarını yansıtan sanat eserleri yaratmışlardır. Kırgızistan'da ulusal tiyatronun oluşumu, sosyo-politik dönüşümler ortasında kültürel gelişimin daha geniş yörüngesiyle doğrudan bağlantılıdır. Kırgızistan'da tiyatro sanatı uzun bir süre Sovyet ideolojisi çerçevesinde gelişmiştir; ancak zamanla, ulusal kimliği sahnede kavrama ve ifade etme arzusu ön plana çıkmıştır. Kırgız tiyatrosu, halk kültürü ve folklor unsurlarını bir araya getirerek, geleneksel motifleri modern tiyatro formlarıyla harmanlayan özgün bir üslup geliştirdi. Tiyatro, zamanla ülkenin ulusal karakteri ve tarihine derinden kök salmış bir

kimlik kazanırken, aynı zamanda küresel kültürel manzaradaki değişimlere de yanıt verdi. Kırgız ulusal operasının önemli bir dönüm noktası, "Alymbek ve Kurmancan"ın sahnelenmesidir. Bu eser, tarihi olayları ve kahraman figürlerini canlandırarak, günümüz izleyicilerinin miraslarıyla bağ kurmasını sağlar. Performansı, yalnızca kültürel hafızayı korumakla kalmaz, aynı zamanda ulusal değerleri teşvik eder ve genç nesiller arasında vatanseverlik bilincini besler.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sahne yaratıcılığı, kültürel dönüşüm, estetik, inovasyon, ulusal kimlik, yaratıcı stratejiler, tür sentezi, sanatsal arayışlar.

INTRODUCTION

The relevance of this study lies in the need to comprehend the transformation of theatrical and musical forms in the context of modernist change, which has shaped the trajectory of contemporary artistic development. Investigating the specific features of these processes within Kyrgyzstan provides a deeper understanding of how national traditions are integrated with global artistic trends. In today's cultural environment – marked by a search for new means of expression and a re-evaluation of identity – the analysis of historical stages in the evolution of performing arts takes on particular significance in forming a comprehensive perspective on artistic development. The emergence of modernist trends in theatrical art was influenced by the achievements of artists from previous eras, particularly those of antiquity. This dimension is explored by Taxidou (2021), who analyses how classical texts and images from Greek drama not only influenced the aesthetics of modernism but were also actively reinterpreted through modern theatrical practices. Arrington (2021) focuses on the concept of late modernism in theatre, not only as an aesthetic category but also as an ethical stance.

Theatrical modernism emerged as a critical tool for engaging with reality – particularly through political, ecological, gender, and postcolonial discourses (Ji et al., 2023; Shershova and Chaika, 2024). Modernism adapted to new circumstances, evolving into a dynamic instrument of reflection within global theatre and opening new horizons for interpreting theatre as a space of critical thought and aesthetic experimentation (Gonçalves, 2024; Elebesova and Kaiypova, 2022). Curtin et al. (2023) analyse how modernism continues to exist and transform in contemporary theatrical contexts. Gupta et al. (2024) investigate transformations in the spatial, functional, and architectural organisation of performing arts centres in relation to historical shifts and current demands. Aranyosy (2022) examines how the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the adoption of digital

technologies in the entertainment industry, particularly in the domain of online cinema broadcasting.

The processes of the formation and actualisation of Kyrgyz national identity within the post-Soviet cultural and political landscape are examined by Urmanbetova et al. (2021). The authors approach the issue from an interdisciplinary perspective, combining linguistic, literary, and cultural methodologies. The central thesis of their work is that Kyrgyz national identity is not a fixed phenomenon, but rather a dynamic construct that evolves under the influence of both internal and external factors. They highlight that contemporary Kyrgyz intellectuals, writers, and artists are increasingly turning to historical narratives and national symbols as instruments of self-assertion on the international stage. In a related study, İsaeva (2023) explores the transformation of Kyrgyz folk dance under the influence of opera and ballet culture. The author argues that the synthesis of folk dance and academic stage forms has not only served as a cultural adaptation but also as a means of representing national identity in the theatrical space. Transformations in the field of Kyrgyz culture and art in the context of globalisation and social change are investigated by Tynaliev (2021). Her study focuses on the processes influencing traditional cultural expressions, particularly folk customs, national crafts, traditional musical instruments, dances, and theatre.

The aim of the present study is to undertake a comprehensive investigation into the transformations of theatrical and musical forms prompted by modernist tendencies, as well as to provide an analytical interpretation of their artistic embodiment in contemporary Kyrgyz art practices. The study pursues the following objectives:

1. To analyse the main characteristics of modernist trends in theatrical and musical art.
2. To explore the historical development and distinctive features of theatrical and musical forms in Kyrgyzstan.
3. To examine current examples of theatrical and musical productions in Kyrgyzstan as reflections of socio-cultural change.

METHODOLOGY

The study covers the period from 2019 to 2025, corresponding to performance of the operas “Alymbek and Kurmanzhan” (premiered in 2025) and “Sun & Sea” (premiered in 2017), the analysis of which is central to this work. A historical-cultural method was employed as the foundational approach for examining the genesis of theatrical and musical forms in Kyrgyzstan

within the broader context of modernisation processes that have unfolded in Central Asia during the 20th and 21st centuries. The investigation into the development of theatre in Kyrgyzstan included an analysis of the socio-political and cultural-historical conditions of the Soviet period, a study of the formation processes of the national theatre, its interactions with Western European theatrical schools, and the influence of traditional Kyrgyz epic heritage, religious beliefs, and folklore on the stylistic evolution of theatrical productions. The historical-cultural approach made it possible to trace the transformations of Kyrgyz theatre art in relation to political and social change, particularly during the Soviet era. A historical-aesthetic analysis was also employed to consider the evolution of theatrical forms in light of socio-cultural and political developments. Additionally, a philosophical-aesthetic perspective was adopted, with a focus on the influence of avant-garde and modernist movements, particularly the work of Schoenberg and his followers.

The textual method was applied for a detailed analysis of dramaturgy, opera librettos, and theatrical texts that were the primary subjects of the study. This included the operas “Sun & Sea” and “Alymbek and Kurmanzhan” (Naq Media, 2025b; Eastham, 2021), both of which exemplify a synthesis of local cultural themes with elements of post-dramatic aesthetics, multimedia technologies, and an interdisciplinary approach to stagecraft – features characteristic of contemporary musical theatre. These operas were chosen because of how well they combined contemporary theatrical advances with regional cultural themes. Traditional Kyrgyz components are combined with multimedia technologies, post-dramatic aesthetics, and an interdisciplinary approach to stagecraft in both operas. These pieces are perfect for this study since they not only demonstrate the preservation of the nation's cultural legacy but also challenge the conventions of modern musical theatre. Their artistic qualities demonstrate the changing relationship between tradition and innovation and serve as an example of how modernism transformed theatrical forms. An in-depth textual analysis of lyrics, dialogues, and musical compositions was conducted to identify cultural symbols, mythological imagery, and national motifs that underpinned the creation of these works. The interpretation of the operas’ underlying messages was carried out using textual and semiotic analysis, enabling the identification of deeper meanings within the context of contemporary cultural processes.

The method of analysing national musical and theatrical genres and their interaction with traditional cultural codes formed an integral part of the research. In examining the operas – particularly “Alymbek and Kurmanzhan” – the study explored how this work integrates traditional

elements of Kyrgyz culture with modern theatrical forms. Given the opera's pronounced national subtext, the research focused on identifying the mechanisms by which it functions as a cultural representation of Kyrgyz identity.

The research employed various musicological methods, including harmonic analysis, thematic analysis, and stylistic analysis of selected musical fragments. These methods enabled a detailed study of compositional structure, the use of folk melodies, rhythmic patterns, and vocal techniques. Primary sources "Kurmanzhan" for analysis included audio recordings of the production (Aikol Studio, 2025) and critical reviews (DRM Entertainment Plus, 2025), which highlighted key features of performance and interpretation. Scenographic analysis was applied to investigate the visual design of the productions, allowing for an assessment of the role played by stage space, costume design, and lighting in conveying the artistic vision. The cultural studies approach further contributed to a deeper understanding of theatrical and musical forms as indicators of sociocultural transformation.

RESULTS

Modernist Trends in Musical and Theatrical Art (Late 19th – Mid-20th Centuries).

One of the defining characteristics of modernism is its rejection of the normative aesthetics of previous eras. Rather than treating theatre and music as tools for emotional catharsis or moral instruction, modernist artists came to view art as a medium for exploring human experience, language, temporality, and corporeality. Formal experimentation in modernist musical and theatrical art was inextricably linked to a rethinking of compositional logic and musical material (Shmarko and Hrechanyk, 2023; Kelmendi, 2024). Arnold Schoenberg, one of the central figures in this transformation, introduced radical musical techniques, among which atonality and dodecaphony became the most renowned. In his stage monodrama "Erwartung" (1909), there is no tonal organisation; instead, the musical fabric is constructed through the continuous development of micro-gestures that express the inner psychological states of the heroine. This work is widely considered one of the earliest examples of the "psychological opera" – a genre in which sound does not depict external reality but constructs an inner world characterised by fragmentation, emotional instability, and tension. The musical dramaturgy in "Erwartung" functions as a carrier of psychological intensity, reflecting the protagonist's immersion in irrational fear, anxiety, and loneliness. As Küçük Özbek (2024) notes, "Erwartung" stands as a radical embodiment of

modernist musical-theatrical aesthetics, replacing traditional narrative structures with internal monologue and privileging emotional intensity over plot. In his later work, notably “Die glückliche Hand” (1910-1913), Schoenberg extends these principles through synthetic dramaturgy, combining music, scenography, visual effects, and colour symbolism to broaden the scope of theatrical perception (Tinio, 2024).

Comparable aesthetic explorations can be found in the work of Alban Berg and Anton Webern, who, alongside Schoenberg, formed the core of the so-called Second Viennese School. Their stage compositions are characterised by dramatic intensity, psychological depth, and symbolic richness. Berg’s opera “Wozzeck” (1925), for instance, blends dodecaphonic technique with powerful expressivity to reveal the social and existential drama of the individual within a dehumanised world. “Wozzeck” is notable not only as a musical achievement but also as a theatrical experiment. Set within a framework of social critique and psychological realism, the work becomes an artistic reflection on the dehumanisation of the individual under capitalist and militarised conditions. As Delaere (2025) observes, the central focus is the figure of the protagonist, whose fragmented consciousness is mirrored in the opera’s discontinuous musical structure. The opera thus functions as both a musical and dramatic embodiment of the modern subject’s crisis.

Modernism was not confined to the realm of music; in the theatre, new approaches to dramaturgy, acting, and audience interaction were simultaneously emerging (Zhetessova et al., 2025; Zhou et al., 2024). One of the most influential figures in modernist theatre was Bertolt Brecht. Brecht rejected the idea of emotional identification with characters and proposed instead distancing (*Verfremdung*) as a method for stimulating critical thinking. Theatrical action in this model abandons the illusion of reality, breaks into episodic structures, and is often interspersed with commentary, songs, and placards, all of which emphasise the constructed nature of the performance. This disruption of dramatic unity generates the *Verfremdungseffekt* (alienation effect), which directs the audience’s attention away from empathetic engagement and towards analytical reflection. Brechtian theatre not only denies illusion and catharsis but aims to cultivate the viewer’s critical consciousness, aligning with the Platonic notion of education through art (Gürsoy, 2025; Bayramova, 2025).

Within this context, Brecht’s collaboration with composer Kurt Weill is of particular significance. Their joint work “Die Dreigroschenoper” (1928) epitomises the principles of epic theatre within the musical genre. Kurt Weill’s music is characterised by a synthesis of jazz, cabaret, and classical

elements, creating an ironic soundscape that underpins the work’s social critique. In conjunction with Brecht’s dramaturgy, Weill’s music becomes a powerful ideological tool, using aesthetic detachment to highlight social contradictions. In the work of Brecht and Weill, modernism achieves a distinctive synthesis: music, text, visual imagery, and performance are treated as equal elements in the communicative process with the audience (Reimers, 2024).

The modernist stage art of this period should be considered within the broader context of its cultural and philosophical backdrop. Art increasingly becomes a form of philosophical reflection, and theatre and music evolve into spaces for modelling new forms of subjectivity. Whereas in the 19th century the primary aims of opera and drama were aesthetic enrichment and moral education, modernism introduced a fundamentally different mission: immersion in deep psychological and social processes, exposing uncertainty, disillusionment, and irrationality as defining characteristics of the era. Art ceases to reflect reality in the traditional mimetic sense and instead assumes the role of a medium for its critical re-examination. Theatre and music cease to function as self-contained aesthetic objects and instead operate as processes of dialogue and reflection. In the modernist era, art definitively abandons its autonomy and enters into active engagement with society – its ideological tensions, historical traumas, aspirations, and collective uncertainties (Issakova et al., 2021; Serikova et al., 2024). To systematise the principal features of modernist trends in global theatre and music, a generalising Table 1 has been created. Table 1 outlines the key characteristics that shaped the new stage language of the 20th century

Key feature	Short description
Rejection of classical canons	Transformation of classical drama, departure from linear plot and clear morality
The search for new forms of stage expression	Avant-garde genres, combining theatre with performance, experiments with space and language
Existential themes	Focus on the inner world of the individual, problems of choice, fear, alienation
Intermediality	Use of new technologies: video, projections, electronic music
Deconstruction of theatrical illusion	The viewer’s awareness of artistic convention, the destruction of the “fourth wall”
Social criticism	Theatre as a platform for understanding current issues: war, racism, gender

Table 1. Key features of modernist trends in global theatrical and musical art.

The evolution of musical theatre during the modernist period brought about significant changes in artistic forms, resulting in new approaches to composition, stage interpretation, and expressive techniques (Issakova et al., 2023; Kalashnyk, 2024). In the musical and theatrical creativity of the 21st century, the influence of modernism is evident in the pursuit of experimentation, the breakdown of traditional genre boundaries, and an emphasis on conceptual artistic expression.

Modernist ideas have prompted a rethinking of the roles of both the audience and the performer, an expansion of spatial and acoustic dimensions of the stage, and the integration of new media and performative practices into musical dramaturgy (Ouazzani et al., 2022). These trends are vividly reflected in the eco-opera “Sun & Sea”, which extends the operatic form beyond the confines of traditional theatre, transforming it into a socially significant artistic gesture.

The opera-installation “Sun & Sea” (2019), created by Rugilė Barzdžiukaitė, Vaiva Grainytė, and Lina Lapelytė, combines elements of musical theatre, performance, and visual art. The work exemplifies key features of a postmodern interpretation of modernism: the deconstruction of classical theatrical form, the blurring of boundaries between audience and performer, and the rejection of linear dramaturgy. The opera presents a profound meditation on contemporary global concerns, particularly the escalating climate crisis. The creators challenge the prevailing notion that in times of catastrophe, society halts ordinary activities to address the crisis. Instead, the opera portrays characters continuing their routine lives amidst unfolding ecological disaster (Figure 1).



a)



b)

Figure 1. Rugile Barzdžiukaite, Vaiva Greinite and Lina Lapelite, “Sun & Sea” (2019): a) general stage view; b) close-up of the two performers (Eastham, 2021).

A key aspect of the work is that the inner world of each character is revealed through intermittent songs in which they articulate their personal experiences. These reflections touch on themes such as sex, death, routine, and private tragedies, highlighting the egocentric nature of the characters. The characters become metaphors for a broader global crisis affecting the entire planet. They are portrayed simultaneously as both symptoms and agents of the catastrophe.

The minimalist musical score reinforces the ordinariness and banality of the characters’ preoccupations, which are shaped by the pervasive influence of capitalist culture. Significantly, the opera refrains from moralising or delivering overt reproaches. Instead, it creates space for the characters to express their thoughts through lived experiences and emotional vulnerability. Particularly symbolic are the figures of the twin girls at the centre of the libretto. They represent a link between personal loss and a wider, collective grief that resonates across the world. Their dual identity as “3D sisters” serves as a poignant emblem of a vanishing world. Through them, the opera underscores the entanglement of private emotional realities with planetary-scale collapse, presenting a compelling metaphor for the interconnectedness of human experience and environmental destruction.

In conclusion, modernist theatre and music represent a fundamental shift in artistic expression, moving away from previous genres that valued emotional catharsis and moral precepts, towards a more introspective investigation of the human mind and societal challenges. Through the works of theatre practitioners like Brecht and composers like Schoenberg, Berg, and Webern, modernist artists challenged conventional wisdom and embraced formal experimentation, transforming the

stage into a space for contemplating existential issues, social critique, and psychological complexity. The deconstruction of classical narrative forms, the utilisation of intermediality, and the concentration on subjective experience generated a new, dynamic language that continues to impact modern theatre and music. Modernism's influence survives today, as demonstrated in works like "Sun & Sea", which stretch the boundaries of established genres and offer a critical reflection on the global challenges of our time. Through these advances, art became not only a reflection of reality but an active agent in transforming how we engage with the world, challenging viewers and listeners to confront their personal realities in the face of collective uncertainty and change.

Historical Features of the Development of Theatrical and Musical Forms in Kyrgyzstan

Chronologically, three distinct periods can be identified in the history of the formation and development of the opera genre in Kyrgyzstan. The first spans from 1917 to 1939, during which time the art form evolved from amateur performances featuring interstitial musical numbers to the emergence of the first Kyrgyz opera. The second period, from 1939 to the mid-1970s, saw the consolidation of both genre and thematic lines within Kyrgyz opera. This era included operas based on fairy-tale epics, historical-revolutionary subjects, and contemporary themes, as well as the development of musical drama and musical comedy. The third period, from the late 1980s to the present, is marked by a notable hiatus in Kyrgyz composers' engagement with the opera genre between 1974 and 1986 – a phase previously characterised as somewhat controversial. Kyrgyzstan's independence and the country's movement toward democratic governance, an "open society", and the adoption of market relations inevitably impacted the arts. These socio-cultural shifts directly and indirectly influenced the formation and transformation of the national opera genre. Determining the nature and specific manifestations of this influence remains an important area of scholarly inquiry. The early 1990s may be interpreted as a pivotal stage that significantly shaped the future trajectory of Kyrgyz art more broadly. Increasingly, it seems relevant to consider the final decade of the 20th century as a distinct period in the history of Kyrgyz opera. After the premiere of D. Kanimetov's opera "Ak-Mor", no new operatic works by Kyrgyz composers were produced until the early 2000s (Thomson, 2021).

Prior to the October Revolution of 1917, there was no professional theatre of the European type in Kyrgyzstan. The precursors of musical theatre in Kyrgyz folk art can be found in the performative and dramatic elements embedded within the oral traditions of professional artists such as the manaschi (narrators of the epic ("Manas")), jomokchu (storytellers), improvisational poets, kuuduls

(comedians and satirists), and instrumental performers including the komuzchu and kyyakchi. These artists performed on traditional instruments such as the komuz and kyyak. The tradition also included zhirchi (folk singers), as well as aytsh – competitive singing and performance contests. Spectacular and performative elements were also present in the broader folklore environment, including ritual, labour, and everyday songs; koshoks and joktoo – funeral and memorial laments or odes – and youth games. The Kyrgyz public was first introduced to opera through touring companies. In 1925, the Tashkent Opera performed “Carmen” and “The Barber of Seville”, and in 1926, a Ukrainian operetta troupe presented “Natalka-Poltavka” and “The Zaporozhian Beyond the Danube” (Duman, 2023).

The National Opera House in Kyrgyzstan evolved from a drama theatre in the late 1930s. The emergence of the first national opera was preceded by amateur dramatic performances in the early 1920s, which occasionally featured vocal and instrumental interludes – quotations from folk songs, often the more playful and spirited ones. These performances were staged by a theatre school-studio, established in 1926, which now forms the basis of the Kyrgyz National Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre named after A. Malydybaev. Under the leadership of director N. Yelin and musical director D. Matsutsin, early productions included “Goremichne Kakey” (1927), “Toburchak” (1931), and “Perezhitki” (1932). The 1930s saw the emergence of original musical dramas such as “Adjal Orduna” (“Not Death, but Life”) by A. Malydybaev and D. Kovalyov (1934), “Karachach” (1935), and “Dzhapalak Jatpasov” (1936) by A. Malydybaev and P. Shubin. Later works included “Altyn Kyz” (“Golden Girl”) and “Zolota Dyvkaz” (1937) by V. Vlasov and V. Fere, and a second version of “Adjal Orduna” in 1938 by V. Vlasov, A. Malydybaev, and A. Fere. The core of the musical troupe consisted of students from the school-studio, who trained as actor-vocalists. Among them were A. Botaliev, A. Kuttubaeva, K. Eshimkanov, A. Malydybaev, and M. Mustayeva. Prominent folk musicians were also invited to join the troupe, including K. Akiev, O. Bolebalaev, S. Karalaev, M. Kurenkeev, and I. Tumanov (Bartl, 2025).

The collaboration between V. Vlasov, V. Fere, and the gifted Kyrgyz musician, singer, and actor A. Malydybaev during the development of the musical drama “Adjal Orduna” became a notable example of early creative cooperation in national opera (Duman, 2023).

The first national opera “Ai-Churek” (1939), composed by V. Vlasov, A. Malydybaev, and V. Fere with a libretto by K. Malikov, Zh. Turusbekov, and J. Bokonbaev, achieved tremendous success. This work became a vivid example of the creative synthesis of folkloric themes and musical sources

with the traditions of fairy-tale and epic opera. The plot, based on an episode from the epic “Manas”, organically combined lyrical and heroic fairy-tale elements. Its melodic foundation drew upon epic poems well known among the Kyrgyz people (Thomson, 2021).

In the early 1940s, operatic works reflecting revolutionary themes began to emerge, such as “Toktogul” by A. Veprik (1940), centred on the renowned akyn Toktogul Satylganov, and “For the Happiness of the People” by V. Vlasov and V. Fere (1941), which is focused on the figure of the commander M. V. Frunze. Composer M. Raukhverger created a fairy-tale opera based on the short epic “Altyn Kokul” – Golden Chub (1943) – and later produced a revised version titled “The Legend of the Golden-Curled Youth” (1976). With the opera “Patriots”, composers V. Vlasov, A. Maldybaev, and V. Fere were among the first in the USSR to address the theme of resistance against the Nazi invaders (1941). The first independent “Kim Kantti” (“Who Did What”) was staged, based on the comedy of the same name by the prominent Kyrgyz playwright K. Dzhantoshev (Saley, 2021).

The post-war years and the 1950s marked a period of intensive development for the opera genre in Kyrgyzstan. By the 1950s, the professional level of the theatre’s creative ensemble had significantly increased. The first Kyrgyz musicians with formal higher education in music began to contribute, including conductor A. Dzhumakhmatov and choirmaster S. Yusupov. Talented artists such as A. Arefyev, conductors G. Chernov, R. Mironov, M. Shepper, Yu. Volgin, and K. Moldobasanov played a crucial role in raising the artistic quality of performances. The traditions of the national vocal and performance school were shaped through the work of distinguished singers and actors who were honoured with prestigious titles: A. Maldybayev, S. Kiizbayeva, A. Mirzabaev, M. Makhmutova, K. Chodronov, S. Toktonaliev, and I. Derkimbaeva. Celebrated national poets, prose writers, and playwrights contributed to the creation of opera librettos, including U. Abdykayimov, K. Bayalinov, D. Bokonbyev, N. Baytemirov, K. Malikov, S. Turusbekov, and Z. Arungazieva, as well as Russian writers such as V. Vinnikov, S. Severtsev, N. Imshenetsky, and A. Mashistov. During this period, the thematic range, subject matter, and genre diversity of Kyrgyz opera expanded considerably (Collins and Stockton, 2022).

Composers V. Vlasov, A. Maldybaev, and V. Fere created a large-scale heroic-epic composition, “Manas”, based on one of the central dramatic episodes of the eponymous epic – “Kokotaydin Ashi” (“The Wake for Koketay”); a lyrical-psychological drama with heroic elements on a contemporary theme, “On the Shores of Issyk-Kul” (1951); as well as the opera “Toktogul” (1958).

A. Veprik, again in collaboration with A. Maldybaev, turned to the image of Toktogul in 1949. S. Germanov, in co-authorship with A. Amanbaev, composed a lyrical opera-drama based on the “minor epic” “Aidar and Aisha” (1952). S. Ryauzov depicted the events of the civil war in Kyrgyzstan in the opera “White Falcon” (1957), while L. Knipper portrayed the life of collective farmers in “Murat” (1959). The first opera composed independently by a Kyrgyz composer was the lyrical youth comedy “Young Hearts” by M. Abdraev. Together with A. Maldybaev, he also created another opera dedicated to Toktogul (1956). In all of these works, the composers employed original techniques to re-intonate folkloric material. At the same time, issues common to Soviet opera of the period are clearly evident, including the balance between song and symphonic structure, and the coherence of musical architectonics, particularly in the context of addressing a new set of challenges for the operatic form.

By the 1960s, three principal thematic lines had emerged in the development of Kyrgyz opera: the fairy-tale-epic, the historical-revolutionary, and the modern-contemporary. The Kyrgyz State Opera and Ballet Theatre, recipient of the Order of Lenin, had become an essential institution in the national musical culture. It accumulated considerable experience in staging both national works and the global opera repertoire. The consistently high artistic standard of the performances was ensured by the professionalism of conductors such as A. Dzhumakhmatov and V. Rutter, and directors A. Kuttubaev and V. Shakhrai. However, the process of developing national opera began to reveal certain internal contradictions, primarily related to compositional challenges. Other “hidden” problems, of a different nature, were less visible and often overshadowed by the officially endorsed, uniformly positive narrative that portrayed musical and theatrical art as symbolic of the Kyrgyz people’s “cultural leap” – a trope convenient for Soviet ideological discourse. The unsuccessful stage fate of a number of new operas that appeared in considerable numbers during the 1960s is often interpreted in existing literature as inevitable or ordinary creative missteps, with little effort made in musicology or criticism to investigate the deeper causes. For instance, the lyrical musical dramas “Aidar and Aisha” by S. Germanov (1952) and “Oljobay and Kishimjan” by M. Abdraev (1965) did not take hold in performance practice, suggesting their limited artistic efficacy in the cultural context of the time. The operatic adaptation of Aitmatov’s novella “Jamila” by M. Raukhverger (1961, revised 1964) similarly failed to generate the expected public response. Nonetheless, the 1960s also saw some creative breakthroughs. One such success was the musical

comedy “The Bachelors” (1960) by A. Amanbaev, with a libretto by Sh. Beyshenaliyev, which engagingly portrays the life of the modern intelligentsia (Aranyosy, 2022).

During the 1970s, a marked decline in both compositional activity and public interest in the opera genre was observed. Composers who had stood at the origins of professional musical art in Kyrgyzstan – particularly in the European-style opera genre – such as V. Vlasov, V. Fere, and M. Rauhverger, began offering revised editions of earlier works for performance. However, it was also during this decade that one of Kyrgyzstan’s most notable musical-theatrical works emerged: the musical comedy “Asta sekin, koluktu” (“Be Careful, Bride”, 1971) by N. Davlesov, with a libretto by N. Baytemirov. The opera “Before the Storm” (1974) by M. Abdraev, which demonstrated significant artistic potential, was never realised on stage. The 1970s saw the rise of an remarkable generation of vocalists on the Kyrgyz opera stage. This cohort included People’s Artists of the USSR – B. Minzhylkiev, K. Sartbaeva, T. Seytaliev, and Kh. Mukhtarov – as well as People’s Artists of the Kyrgyz SSR – M. Temirbekov, Ye. Molchanova, V. Mukovnikov, E. Moldokulova, and others. These performers upheld the heritage and traditions of the national vocal and performance school. Their artistic contributions elevated theatrical culture to a new qualitative level, consistent with the highest aesthetic and professional standards of vocal art at the time. Significant contributions to the development of the theatre were also made by conductor and composer N. Davlesov, as well as directors K. Arziev and M. Akhunbaev (Duman, 2023).

Between 1974 and 1986, no new national operas premiered at the Kyrgyz National Opera and Ballet Theatre, with the exception of revised productions of previously composed works. A notable example is the repeated return to the opera centred on the military leader Mikhail Frunze, which appeared under various titles over time – from for the “Happiness of the People” (1947), through “An Hour Before Sunrise” (1969), to “Mikhail Frunze” (1984). Over a decade passed before the premieres of new operas by Kyrgyz composers: “Sepil” (“Fortress”) by S. Osmonov, with a libretto by Zh. Mamytov based on folk tales, and “Kurmanbek” by N. Davlesov, to a libretto by Zh. Sadykov based on a popular folk legend. These productions were staged between 1987 and 1991 (Shepherd-Barr, 2005).

By the late 1980s and early 1990s, the “portfolio” of Kyrgyz composers had accumulated a sufficient number of artistically significant operatic works. However, the opera “Sepil” was not incorporated into the active theatre repertoire. In contrast, N. Davlesov’s opera “Kurmanbek” had secured a permanent place in the theatre’s repertoire by the beginning of the 2003 season, which

provides grounds to anticipate its continued stage presence. Chronologically, the last national production to be staged at the Kyrgyz National Opera and Ballet Theatre was “Ak-Moor” by Zh. Kanimetov – a representative of the new generation of Kyrgyz composers, and a talented musician and conductor. This production was included in the national theatre’s repertoire. Unstaged works serve as illustrative examples of the consequences of both restrictive and favourable development trends. The issue of the effectiveness of the opera house’s functioning in Kyrgyzstan is a complex one and encompasses a broad range of aspects of musical culture (Aranyossy, 2022).

Examining the current socio-cultural changes in Kyrgyzstan can be effectively done through the Abdymomunov Kyrgyz National Drama Theatre's modern production of Chingiz Aitmatov's “The Day Lasts More Than a Hundred Years”. Aitmatov’s work, originally a literary investigation of the collision between traditional nomadic culture and the growing forces of industrialization and modernisation, resonates powerfully in a contemporary environment where Kyrgyz society continues to battle with comparable contradictions.

This production's analysis of the conflict between modernisation and tradition is among the most important ways it represents socio-cultural change. As Kyrgyzstan enters the twenty-first century, rural communities, many of which have historically followed a nomadic lifestyle, are changing due to urbanisation and globalisation. These topics are directly addressed in “The Day Lasts More Than a Hundred Years”, particularly via the protagonist's effort to balance the pressures of modernity with the timeless ideals of his cultural background. This struggle is similar to the problems Kyrgyz society is currently facing, as migration from rural to urban areas and the introduction of new technology upend long-standing social structures and conventions.

Additionally, the production skilfully highlights the continuous fragmentation of traditional lifeways through the use of multimedia components and minimalist scenography. The filmmakers emphasise the rising gap between the old and modern ways of living by using projections and other technological components, which show how the natural world and the increasingly technology environment are becoming disconnected. The more symbolic and realistic stage setups that can represent historic nomadic surroundings, for example, are sharply contrasted with video projections of contemporary metropolitan landscapes or pictures of ecological destruction, such as pollution or deforestation. As many Kyrgyz people navigate these dual realities – the persistence of traditional values in a world increasingly shaped by global forces and technological change – the juxtaposition

of old and new forms of representation highlights the psychological and emotional alienation that they feel.

To identify the key features of modern theatrical and musical art in Kyrgyzstan within the framework of socio-cultural transformation, a table has been created providing a brief overview of the relevant trends (Table 2).

Current feature	Manifestation in the theatrical art of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan
Reflection of historical memory	Productions that interpret national myths and epics
Ethnocultural authenticity	Incorporation of traditional instruments, narratives, and music into contemporary performances
Rethinking national identity	Heroes of operas and musical dramas as the embodiment of modern ideas about “our own”
Adaptation to global formats	Co-productions, festival forms, combination of genres, application of new technologies
Development of regional initiatives	The emergence of local theatres and interpretations, the involvement of non-academic forms
Educational and enlightenment function	Theatre as a platform for discussing social and cultural topics in communities

Table 2. Current features of theatrical and musical art in Kyrgyzstan as a form of reflection of socio-cultural changes.

Despite the growing interest in the national musical theatre, opera art in Kyrgyzstan faces a number of significant challenges that affect its development. In particular, it occurs because of the limited funding and the need for constant modernization of the technical base. Due to the professionalism of the artists and the support of state institutions, the A. Maldybaev National Opera and Ballet Theatre continues to remain the main opera stage of the country. Its repertoire includes classical works of the world opera heritage – in particular, operas by O. Borodina, G. Verdi, G. Bizet – which contributes to maintaining a high professional level and providing viewers with access to samples of the genre that meet reference standards (Naq Media, 2025a). At the same time, the theatre realizes productions of national works aimed at understanding the historical and cultural experience of the Kyrgyz people. One of such artistic projects was the Kyrgyz national opera “Alymbek and Kurmanzhan”, the premiere of which took place on April 12, 2025 on the stage of the A. Maldybaev National Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre in Bishkek (Naq Media, 2025b). The performance embodies a historical drama about two outstanding figures of the Kyrgyz people – Alymbek Datka and Kurmanzhan Datka. The figure of Kurmanzhan is one of the most important in the collective memory of the Kyrgyz nation. Through her image, the opera addresses the theme of service to the people, inner dignity and self-sacrifice, while preserving individual lyricism. The leitmotif of the opera is the idea of preserving the spiritual connection between generations, which is embodied in the dramatic clash of personal experiences with national duty (Efremov, 2025; Urumkulova, 2022). This motif, at the same time philosophical and patriotic, clearly structures the entire performance from both an aesthetic and an ethical perspective (Figure 2).



Figure 2. The premiere of the national historical and dramatic opera “Alymbek and Kurmanzhan” (Naq Media, 2025b)

The music for the performance was composed by Satylgan Osmonov, People’s Artist of the Kyrgyz Republic. The melodic and orchestral writing is distinguished by an expressive timbral palette, enhancing the lyrical dramaturgy and imparting greater depth to the stage action. The libretto, authored by Bubaisha Arstanbekova, is notable for combining the epic quality of historical narrative with poetic symbolism. The conductor’s interpretation by Nurmatbek Polotov and the stage design by Iskender Sartbayev are characterised by a deliberate balance between monumentality and psychological nuance. The production demonstrates profound respect for national material – each stage movement carries semantic significance. The colour palette reinforces the thematic focus on spiritual choices and the unfolding of fate. Choreographer Kanat Nadyrbek devised a choreographic score that serves as a visual counterpoint to the vocal performance. The dance sequences expand the emotional register of the production, with the plasticity of movement conveying both intimate experience and epic pathos.

These works' ongoing examination of Kyrgyz history is a direct reaction to the sociopolitical shifts the nation has seen since the Soviet era, when discussions about national identity were curtailed by state control over artistic expression. Therefore, in the face of both internal and external pressures, contemporary works are essential to rebuilding and reasserting national ideals.

Furthermore, the shifting dynamics of Kyrgyz society (gender roles, intergenerational disputes, and maintaining tradition in the face of fast modernization) are being more and more addressed in

contemporary Kyrgyz performances. These subjects are examined by combining contemporary artistic methods with aspects of traditional Kyrgyz culture. Productions depict the conflict between the past and present by fusing epic stories, folklore, and traditional music with modern stagecraft. This allows for a discussion between traditional Kyrgyz values and the effects of globalisation. Modern literature, for instance, regularly addresses societal concerns like urbanisation, gender equality, and the difficulties experienced by young people, underscoring the nation's continuous social change.

DISCUSSION

In the development of musical theatre across the eras of modernism, postmodernism and into the 21st century, the dialogue between traditional art and contemporary form-making trends assumes particular significance. Since the early 20th century, there has been an active re-evaluation of established aesthetic norms, resulting in modernist experimentation becoming increasingly integrated with folklore heritage. Similar conclusions were reached in the study by Azizi and EshaqZai (2022), who argue that post modernism functions not as a continuation but rather as a reaction to modernism.

Modernist authors do not merely reference tradition; they deconstruct and transform it. Within this framework, the national and the global, the archaic and the radically modern, are no longer opposed but instead emerge as interdependent elements of a unified aesthetic system. Similar perspectives are found in the work of Hafstein (2024), who explores the complex relationship between tradition, continuity, and the institutionalisation of cultural practices.

Adams (1996) examines how Soviet cultural policy facilitated the establishment of new artistic institutions, integrating traditional art forms within a broader all-Union framework. Particular attention is devoted to the formation of professional theatre schools across the republics, which trained actors, directors and composers, including those working in opera. In the Kyrgyz context, these developments occurred in parallel with efforts to preserve the national epic tradition, resulting in a synthesis of folklore elements with the European operatic tradition. This thematic intersection is further explored by İğmen (2019), who analyses the recollections of Kyrgyz theatre practitioners regarding Soviet-era theatre.

As part of this study, the opera “Alymbek and Kurmanzhan” is analysed as a significant artistic statement that transcends historical narration to present an ethical model for the contemporary audience. The work illustrates opera’s potential to explore themes of national identity and historical

memory. A similar analytical approach is adopted by Gümüş and Nasırambekova (2024) in their study of the opera “Aichurek” (1939), based on the Kyrgyz epic “Semetey”, part of the “Manas” trilogy. The authors highlight the opera as the first successful integration of epic material into the operatic form in Kyrgyzstan, blending national cultural content with European musical structures. As a unique form of artistic expression, opera continues to serve as both a repository of national memory and a dynamic space for interpreting contemporary socio-cultural realities.

Poriss (2024) examines the Italian national opera, investigating the concept of national opera within the context of globalisation and transnational cultural processes. The author observes that in recent decades, national opera traditions have undergone significant transformation due to interaction with international cultural currents. The findings of this study mirror those concerning the development of Kyrgyz opera: despite the influence of Soviet ideology and certain internal contradictions, Kyrgyz opera has consistently sought to preserve national traditions while adapting to evolving musical and theatrical norms.

Li and Gong (2024) explore the relationship between cultural identity and historical narrative in the context of Chinese ethnic operas. Complementing this, Zhao and Sornyai (2024) examine opera as a significant cultural medium for shaping and preserving national consciousness in the face of globalisation and socio-cultural transformation in China. One of the central themes of their study was the role of historical narrative in the construction of national identity, specifically through the medium of opera. The conclusions drawn from the study of Kyrgyz opera align with these findings: Kyrgyz musical and dramatic works aim to reconstruct and preserve national traditions and cultural imagery while also responding to external cultural influences and socio-political shifts.

CONCLUSION

The study has demonstrated that modernism, as a cultural and artistic movement of the late 19th and mid-20th centuries, had a profound impact on the emergence of new forms of theatrical art. The findings indicate that modernist theatre not only moved away from classical forms but also actively sought to represent contemporary social and psychological realities. The influence of modernism is particularly evident in the evolution of dramatic structures, where linear narratives gave way to fragmented, complex compositions, and avant-garde scenographic solutions.

Kyrgyz theatrical art emerged in the early 20th century, blending folk culture with Soviet narratives. Despite Soviet influence, theatre between the 1950s and 1980s maintained its national

identity while incorporating modernist elements. The opera *Alymbek and Kurmanzhan* exemplifies this evolution, merging traditional Kyrgyz music with European operatic techniques to reinterpret national epics and reflect contemporary values, marking a significant step in the development of national theatre.

The examination of recent works, particularly “*Alymbek and Kurmanzhan*” and “*Sun & Sea*”, provides important new perspectives on the relationship between regional cultural themes and contemporary theatrical developments. While “*Alymbek and Kurmanzhan*” combines modern stagecraft with folklore and national history, “*Sun & Sea*” is notable for its post-dramatic examination of global socio-political themes, particularly the climate crisis. Both operas use interdisciplinary methods and multimedia technologies, which represent a larger trend in modern theatre to interact with intricate, frequently pressing cultural and environmental concerns. These pieces show how contemporary productions may address urgent global issues and maintain cultural identity at the same time. When taken as a whole, they demonstrate the adaptability and significance of modern theatre in tackling both regional and global issues, highlighting its function as a potent medium for artistic creativity and social reflection.

The limitations of this study lie in its temporal and thematic scope. The research focuses on a specific period of the development of Kyrgyz opera, particularly within the framework of national theatre, thereby limiting broader comparative analyses with other regional operatic or theatrical traditions. Moreover, only a portion of the operatic repertoire – specifically those works that have been staged – is considered. Future research should aim to extend the chronological range, undertake comparative studies between Kyrgyz national operas and other global traditions, and analyse the effects of socio-political transformations on the trajectory of operatic art. Additionally, greater attention should be devoted to examining the role of contemporary composers in preserving and expanding the national operatic heritage.

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Bu çalışma, modernist estetiğin etkisi altındaki tiyatro ve müzik formlarının evrimini ve çağdaş kültürel bağlamlarda geçirdikleri dönüşümü, özellikle de Kırgızistan'da hem sanatsal ifadeler hem de kültürel kimliğin taşıyıcıları olarak ulusal tiyatro ve operanın gelişimine vurgu yaparak incelemektedir. Modernizm burada yalnızca bir stilistik yenilik olarak değil, aynı zamanda sahne sanatının toplumsal gerçeklik, ruh ve kolektif deneyimle etkileşim kurma biçiminde bir paradigma değişimi olarak ele alınmaktadır. Analiz, 19. yüzyılın sonlarından 20. yüzyılın ortalarına kadar küresel tiyatro ve müzikteki modernist eğilimlerin klasik kanonlardan radikal bir sapmaya yol açtığını vurgulamaktadır: doğrusal dramaturjinin yerini parçalanma ve belirsizlik almış, geleneksel karakter tipleri psikolojik olarak karmaşık figürlere bırakmış ve yerleşik armonilerin yerini atonal ve dodekafonik yapılar almıştır. Arnold Schoenberg, Alban Berg ve Anton Webern gibi isimler operanın müzikal dilini yeniden tanımlarken, Bertolt Brecht gibi oyun yazarları epik tiyatro ve

yabancılaştırma etkisiyle tiyatro biçiminde devrim yaratarak izleyicileri edilgen gözlemcilerden etkin ve eleştirel katılımcılara dönüştürdüler. Bu daha geniş modernist dönüşüm, toplumsal eleştiri, varoluşsal temalar ve biçimsel deneyleri birleştiren sonraki tiyatro pratiklerinin temelini oluşturdu ve tiyatro ile müziğin yalnızca estetik yeniliğin değil, aynı zamanda felsefi ve politik düşüncenin de araçları haline geldiğini gösterdi. Bu küresel arka plan içinde, Kırgızistan'da tiyatro kültürünün ortaya çıkışı, Sovyet ideolojik çerçevelerinin yerel epik anlatı, folklor ve performatif ritüel gelenekleriyle kesiştiği dinamik bir süreç olarak yorumlanmaktadır. Ekim Devrimi'nden önce bölgede profesyonel bir Avrupa tarzı tiyatro yoktu, ancak halk sanatçıları - manaschiler, doğaçlama şairler ve ritüel şarkıcılar - daha sonra ulusal operayı etkileyen dramatik prototipler sağladılar. 1930'lar ve 1940'larda Kırgız müzisyenler ve Rus besteciler arasındaki iş birliği, destansı olay örgülerini, folklorik melodileri ve Sovyet devrim temalarını sentezleyen "Ay-Çurek" ve "Toktogul" gibi çığır açan eserlere yol açtı. Sonraki on yıllarda Kırgız operası, sanatsal kalite, ideolojik kısıtlamalar ve izleyici tepkisi gibi zorluklarla boğuşurken, tarihsel-devrimci konular, masal destanları ve çağdaş anlatılar arasında geçiş yaparak repertuarını genişletti. Araştırma, özellikle 1974 ve 1986 yılları arasındaki yaratıcı durgunluk dönemlerine rağmen, ulusal operanın folklor unsurlarını koruyarak ve Sovyet kültür politikası içinde kendine özgü bir kimlik arayışıyla kültürel önemini koruduğunu vurgulamaktadır. Sovyet sonrası dönemde, Kırgızistan bağımsızlığını ve demokratik reformları sürdürürken, opera ve tiyatro, küreselleşme karşısında ulusal kimlik, tarihsel hafıza ve kültürel süreklilik için önemli müzakere alanları haline geldi. Bu dönüşümleri izlemek için çalışma, tarihsel-kültürel ve estetik-felsefi yöntemlerin, librettoların metinsel ve semiyotik analizinin, kompozisyonel yapıların müzikolojik incelemesinin ve sahne tasarımının senografik değerlendirmesinin bir kombinasyonunu kullanmaktadır. Özellikle iki vaka çalışmasına odaklanılmıştır: "Güneş ve Deniz" eko-operası ve Kırgız ulusal operası "Alymbek ve Kurmancan". İlki, çağdaş tiyatrodaki modernist ve postmodernist özelliklerin sürekliliğini örneklemektedir: klasik formun yapıbozumu, sahne ve seyirci arasındaki sınırların belirsizleşmesi ve ekolojik kriz ve insan kayıtsızlığı temalarını vurgulamak için minimalist müziğin kullanımı. "Güneş ve Deniz", sıradan boş zaman aktivitelerini çevresel çöküşün zemininde sunarak, operayı çağdaş yaşamın çelişkilerini yansıtan, toplumsal olarak yankı uyandıran bir enstalasyona dönüştürmektedir. 2019'da Bişkek'te sahnelenen ikinci eser, Kırgız operasının geleneksel motifleri modern dramaturjik yapılarla nasıl birleştirdiğini göstermektedir. Alymbek ve Kurmanzhan Datka gibi tarihi şahsiyetlere ithaf edilen opera, Kırgız halk tonlamalarına dayanan ve opera

orkestrasyonuna entegre edilmiş bir müzik dili kullanırken, onur, fedakarlık ve kuşaklar arası süreklilik gibi ulusal değerleri somutlaştırır. Librettosu, tarihi dramayı şiirsel sembolizmle birleştirir ve sahnelemesi anıtsallık ile psikolojik derinliği dengeler. Koreografik sekanslar duygusal yelpazeyi genişletirken, sahne tasarımı kader ve etik tercih temalarını güçlendirmek için doğalcı bir temsil yerine sembolik bir temsile dayanır. Bu prodüksiyon, çağdaş Kırgız operasının yalnızca kültürel hafızayı korumakla kalmayıp aynı zamanda vatanseverlik bilinci ve yurttaşlık diyalogu için dinamik bir araç olarak nasıl işlev gördüğünü örneklemektedir. Çalışmanın sonuçları, Kırgız tiyatrosu ve operasının sürekli olarak iki işlevi yerine getirdiğini göstermektedir: sanatsal deney ve kültürel koruma. Küresel modernist hareketler estetik araçları (atonalite, parçalanma, multimedya entegrasyonu) sağlarken, yerel gelenekler bu biçimleri ulusal kimliğe dayandıran kültürel kodları (epik anlatılar, ritüel müzik ve folklor) sağlamıştır. Bu unsurların sentezi, hem Kırgız toplumunda hem de daha geniş uluslararası sahnede yankı bulan melez biçimler ortaya çıkarmıştır. Yirmi birinci yüzyılda, Kırgız tiyatro prodüksiyonları küreselleşme, kimliğin yeniden tanımlanması ve toplumsal dönüşüm gibi acil sosyo-kültürel sorunları yansıtırken, aynı zamanda küresel sanatsal uygulamalar ve teknolojilerle de etkileşim kurmaktadır. Opera ve tiyatrolar artık çok işlevli kültürel merkezler olarak hizmet vermekte ve yalnızca estetik zenginleşmeye değil, aynı zamanda toplum diyaloguna ve eğitime de katkıda bulunmaktadır. Ancak, sınırlı finansman, teknolojik kısıtlamalar ve dijital medyanın egemen olduğu bir çağda daha genç izleyicileri çekme ihtiyacı gibi zorluklar devam etmektedir. Bununla birlikte, ulusal operanın dayanıklılığı, hem bir miras deposu hem de sanatsal yenilik için bir laboratuvar olarak kalıcı rolünü göstermektedir. Tartışma, bu bulguları dünya çapında modernizm, postmodernizm ve ulusal opera gelenekleri hakkındaki daha geniş tartışmalar içerisine yerleştirmektedir. İtalya ve Çin ile karşılaştırmalı bakış açıları, farklı tarihsel yörüngelere rağmen, çeşitli bağlamlardaki ulusal operanın, küresel kültürel akışlar karşısında kültürel kimliği ifade etmek için hayati bir araç işlevi gördüğünü vurgulamaktadır. Büyük anlatılara şüpheyile yaklaşan postmodernizm, metinlerarasılığı, çok sesliliği ve izleyici katılımını benimseyerek tiyatronun ifade kapasitelerini daha da genişletmiş ve operatik formların çağdaş gerçekliklere uyum sağlamasını sağlamıştır. Bu ışık altında, Kırgız operası gelenek ve yenilik, özgünlük ve melezlik, yerel kimlik ve küresel katılım arasındaki daha geniş diyalektiğin bir mikrokozmosunu temsil etmektedir. Çalışma, modernizmin mirasının çağdaş tiyatro pratiklerinin merkezinde yer almaya devam ettiğini ve sanatın toplumdaki rolünü yeniden düşünmek için hem estetik stratejiler hem de kavramsal çerçeveler sunduğunu ortaya koymaktadır.

Kırgız operasının tarihsel gelişimini küresel modernist hareketlerle birlikte inceleyen araştırma, ulusal tiyatrunun kültürel koruma ve yaratıcı dönüşüm gibi ikili zorunlulukları somutlaştırmaya devam ettiğini göstermektedir. Opera, bir tür olarak, tarih, kimlik ve sanatın kesişim noktasındaki benzersiz konumunu koruyarak, günümüzün acil toplumsal ve etik sorunlarına değinirken en derin kültürel anılarla etkileşime girebilmektedir.