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ESTABLISHMENT PROSPECTS OF THE TOPRAK-KALA HISTORICAL ETHNO-MUSEUM

Abstract: This article outlines the establishment of the "Toprak-kala Ethno-museum" situated in the Ellik Kala district of the Republic of Karakalpakstan, with the aim of enticing both domestic and international tourists to our region. Moreover, it examines international models of ethnographic museum organization, synthesizing valuable insights to propose adaptable strategies for enhancing the Uzbekistan cultural landscape.

Key Words: Civilization, respect, ethnicity, ethnography, fortress, tradition, tourism, tourism resources, history, tourist, tourist complex, agro, agrotourism, rural tourism, region, ethnographic tourism, traditional craftsmanship, ethnic object, labor resources, folk craftsmanship, ethnographic museum.

Introduction

Establishing an ethnographic museum involves several key steps:

Research and Planning: Begin by conducting thorough research on the cultural heritage and history of the community or region you wish to represent in the museum. Determine the scope and focus of the museum, including the types of artifacts, exhibits, and narratives you want to showcase.

Identify a Location: Choose a suitable location for the museum that is accessible to visitors and aligns with the cultural significance of the exhibits. This could be in a historic building, cultural center, or purpose-built facility.

Secure Funding: Develop a budget for the museum project, including expenses for construction or renovation, staffing, exhibits, marketing, and ongoing operations. Seek funding from government grants, private donors, foundations, and sponsorships.

Legal and Administrative Requirements: Ensure compliance with local regulations and obtain any necessary permits or licenses for operating a museum. Establish a legal entity, such as a nonprofit organization, to oversee the museum's governance and management.

Curatorial Work: Curate collections of ethnographic artifacts, photographs, documents, and multimedia materials that represent the cultural heritage of the community. Work with cultural experts, historians, and community members to authenticate and interpret the exhibits.

Exhibit Design: Design the layout and presentation of exhibits to engage visitors and convey meaningful narratives about the culture, traditions, and history being represented. Consider interactive displays, multimedia installations, and storytelling techniques to enhance the visitor experience.

Outreach and Engagement: Develop educational programs, workshops, and events to promote awareness and appreciation of the museum's collections. Collaborate with schools, community organizations, and cultural institutions to reach diverse audiences and foster community involvement.

Staffing and Training: Recruit and train staff members, including curators, educators, docents, and administrative personnel, to operate the museum effectively and provide excellent visitor services.

Marketing and Promotion: Develop a marketing strategy to raise awareness of the museum and attract visitors. Utilize various channels, such as social media, press releases, advertising, and partnerships with tourism agencies, to promote the museum locally, nationally, and internationally.

Grand Opening and Ongoing Operations: Plan a grand opening ceremony to celebrate the launch of the museum and invite key stakeholders, community leaders, and the public to attend. Implement sustainable management practices to ensure the long-term viability and success of the museum, including fundraising, conservation, and maintenance of collections.

By following these steps, you can establish an ethnographic museum that celebrates and preserves the cultural heritage of a community or region for future generations to appreciate and learn from.

Artifact	Description	Origin
Handwoven Rug	Intricate patterns, vibrant colors	Central Asia
Pottery	Decorative designs, functional use	Middle East
Basketry	Natural materials, intricate weaving	Africa
Woodcarving	Detailed motifs, cultural symbolism	Southeast Asia

Source: The table is created by authors, based on ethnographic research.

Despite the intensification of economic competition globally, tourism remains one of the rapidly developing sectors. All countries are striving to choose a convenient direction for tourism, which means consolidating their favorable position in the market, utilizing comprehensive approaches to providing services, and engaging in modern marketing research. One of the main reasons for this trend is the central role of tourism. Thirty percent of income generated from tourism goes directly into the hands of people. However, this indicator does not exceed 10% in industry and other sectors. Moreover, creating new job opportunities provides unique advantages. The creation of one job in tourism leads to the opening of two additional positions in other sectors.

In our country, the policy aimed at developing tourism has been correctly established. Various moral and legal documents have been adopted, providing entrepreneurs with broad opportunities, thereby contributing to the integration of tourism into the economy. During the 25th session of the General Assembly of the World Tourism Organization held in Samarkand, our country's leader emphasized the crucial importance of creating a modern tourism infrastructure in the strategy being developed for the comprehensive development of tourism until 2030.

It is possible to observe the main part of tourists visiting the Republic of Uzbekistan being related to historical and cultural tourism. In this regard, ethnographic tourism within the borders of our country is considered as one of the indispensable parts of historical and cultural tourism.

In conclusion, the Resolution No. PQ-238 of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated July 27, 2023, "On further improvement of measures to accelerate reforms in the tourism sector and effective organization of state management in the field" initiated the task of organizing ethnographic tourism events in the Republic of Karakalpakstan and regions [1].

The purpose of ethnographic tourism is to visit ethnographic objects in a particular area to familiarize oneself with the culture, traditions, and way of life of a specific ethnic group (ethnos) that currently or continuously resides there. Ethnographic tourism is an effective means of exploring and promoting the natural, historical, and cultural heritage of the country. Ethnographic tourism is a type of cultural-educational tourism related to visiting territories with a wide range of traditional cultural heritage. It involves exploring and getting acquainted with the traditional life of peoples who have historically or currently lived in areas rich in ethnographic heritage,

preserving the ethnographic heritage of the region, adhering to environmental protection regulations, local laws, and regional customs and traditions.

Throughout the world, there are numerous ethnographic museums that present information about various peoples, their cultures, and traditions. Especially noteworthy are the British Museum in London, the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford, the American Museum of Natural History in New York City, the Field Museum in Chicago, the Musee du Quai Branly in Paris, the National Museum of Ethnology in the Netherlands, the National Museum of Ethnography and Folklore in Bolivia, Russia's "My Russia" museum, Azerbaijan's Gala Ethnographic Museum in Baku, and the "Manas" Ethnomuseum in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, among many others.

Establishing an ethnographic museum in Uzbekistan is also considered in line with this goal. Like other regions of our country, the Republic of Karakalpakstan indicates the potential of utilizing historical, cultural, and natural heritage for the development of tourism. In the coming years, with the strategy of the global tourism industry shaping around the concept of sustainable tourism and its steady development, it is essential to identify effective ways to benefit from the heritage of nations in shaping the future for future generations. The Republic of Karakalpakstan, possessing vast tourist resources in various directions, including cultural-educational, ecological, MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions), health, and especially, ethnographic tourism, can promote its inexhaustible potential.

The development of sustainable tourism and eco-tourism initiatives in the region will implement tours that attract travelers from all over the world, providing opportunities for reception and acceptance. Utilizing the cultural heritage of the nation as tourism resources, both materially and spiritually, is considered one of the most effective ways to preserve national traditions and promote traditional values internationally.

In the Ellik Kala district of the Republic of Karakalpakstan, the establishment of the "Toprak-kala Ethno-Museum" is planned in accordance with the goal of promoting ethnographic tourism for the first time in our country, preserving and promoting the cultural heritage of local ethnic groups as tourism products, and presenting them to future generations. The uniqueness of shaping ethnographic tourism in the district lies in the fact that existing resources provide the opportunity to establish an ethno-museum. Analyzing and considering existing resources will facilitate the effective organization of tourism businesses in the Karakalpakstan region. The museum will gather all the objects that contribute to attracting tourists and providing services to them. These resources include natural (natural monuments, recreational areas, landscapes for recreation) and cultural (architectural monuments, museums, theaters, famous historical sites) resources. The development prospects for tourism, especially education, are identified with the presence of cultural and historical resources: the presence of historical and cultural monuments is determined. This includes the traditions, values, and lifestyle of the people.

In the Ellik Kala district, all necessary infrastructure will be considered for the objects to be established within the Ethno-Museum area. The complex, in the form of an ethno-museum complex, will contain areas suitable for the preparation and presentation of national dishes and handicrafts that have historically enriched the culture of the people living there. It will also include information that contextualizes the historical significance of Toprak-kala's cultural heritage and provides all the necessary services for organizing tourism. Its location, being 30 km from Khorezm and 120 km from Nukus, allows for participation in both local and international routes.

Literature Review

Foreign and independent scholars of Great Britain have provided various definitions of ethnographic tourism. Particularly, British scholars M. Stephenson and R. Bianchi expressed the following idea: "Ethnography plays a significant role in tourism and holds great importance for the history, lifestyle, and experiences of humanity [2]."

The scholars from Leeds Metropolitan University of Great Britain, V. Simoni and S. MacKay, emphasized the significant role of studying the arrival of peoples and their lifestyle in shaping the formation of cultural heritage [3].

Professors S. Frolik from the University of Manitoba in Canada and J. Harrison from Trent University have conducted numerous research studies on the contribution of ethnography to the tourism industry and enhancing the tourist potential of the state [4].

Russian scholar G. Sorokina has emphasized the importance of studying historical-ethnographic museums, exploring historical-cultural heritage, and promoting national culture in many multicultural regions [5].

It should be noted that scholarly research on ethnographic tourism has mainly been conducted by foreign scholars, with less attention given by local scholars. Therefore, conducting research on ethnographic tourism is considered one of the relevant topics in today's world.

Research Methodology

Various scientific methods are used in the process of studying natural phenomena during research, including experimental research, generalization, grouping, logical and comparative analysis, abstract-logical reasoning, comparative analysis, statistical analysis, and other methods.

Experimental Research: This method involves conducting experiments to verify rapidly formulated hypotheses. In this research, observations, manipulation, and other outcomes are identified through experiments.

Generalization: The method of generalization is used to summarize and simplify information. This method ensures clarity and efficiency in identifying and collecting data.

Grouping: In the grouping method, phenomena are divided into groups, and their characteristics are studied. This method is important for providing assistance in research and analysis.

Logical and Comparative Analysis: These methods involve clear logical reasoning, comparative analysis, statistical analysis, and other approaches in identifying the latest phenomena.

In the research process, the simultaneous use of several methods is possible, as they complement each other and help to increase comprehensiveness and discuss the results.

Analysis and Findings

Analyzing the definitions mentioned above, it is possible to conclude that the organization of ethnographic tourism is mainly carried out by foreign scholars and has not been thoroughly investigated by local scholars. Continuing the analysis, let's look at the analytical information to make extensive use of the tourism opportunities in the Republic of Karakalpakstan.

1st table

Date	1/20 23	2/20 23	3/20 23	4/20 23	5/20 23	6/20 23	7/20 23	8/20 23	9/20 23	10/20 23	11/20 23
Number of Tourists	101	209	605	1513	2130	1329	958	1740	2189	921	525

This table shows the estimated number of foreign tourists visiting the Republic of Karakalpakstan for each month in 2023 [1].

It can be observed that a number of activities have been carried out in the field of tourism in the Republic of Karakalpakstan in the past period. Specifically, during the year 2023, 114,683 tourists from abroad visited this area, and the travels of 1,044,000 local tourists were recorded. During this period, tourism services worth 25,665,000 USD were exported. In total, 60 travel agencies (from 2018 to 2023), 9 tour operators and travel agents, 1 hotel (consisting of 46 rooms and 98 beds), 3 family guest houses (with 10 rooms and 26 beds), and 5 hostels (consisting of 58 rooms and 181 beds) were operational in 2023.

In 2023, within the framework of the "Travel Uzbekistan" program, 1,044,000 (annual plan - 1,056.6 people) domestic tourists traveled to the Republic of Karakalpakstan. This indicates an increase of 1.6 times compared to 2022.

2nd table

Date	1/2023	2/2023	3/2023	4/2023	5/2023	6/2023	7/2023	8/2023	9/2023	10/2023	11/2023
Export volume (in dollars)	22553	46670	135097	337853	475629	296766	213921	388542	488804	205659	122458

Tourism export volume monthly (USD) [1]

These indicators suggest the implementation of new tours in the field and indicate a positive change towards the development of ethnographic tourism in these areas.

Historically, the construction of the city of Toprak Kala and its fortress has been a significant political event. Because the establishment of this construction marks the beginning of the "Khorezm era" in history, it is highly valued. The rise of the powerful Greco-Bactrian state, the Parthian invasion, and the subsequent destruction are associated with the settling of nomadic tribes in our era. The emergence of "Kangju" culture, the consolidation of the Khorezm state in the lower reaches of the Amu Darya, and the emergence of a new wave of development are all evidence of this period's importance, as emphasized by the encyclopedic scholar Abu Rayhan al-Biruni, who lived during that time. The creation of this city-fortress, as a symbol of the restoration of the Khorezm state and its independence, demonstrates the significance of the throne of the Afrighids and its ancient historical and cultural traditions.

Most scholars consider this construction as the residence of the rulers of the state and as the seat of government. According to the method of construction, the spacious palace with a fortress and the surrounding urban areas form a single space. The fortress of Toprak Kala, located 50 km from the Amu Darya River, is square in shape, with a total area of 17 hectares (500 by 350 meters) and a height of 20 meters, with walls 12 meters thick.

The inhabitants of the fortress were mainly warriors, craftsmen, and guards. The absence of markets and artisans' workshops within the city limits also supports this idea. The original palace building, the discovery of ancient manuscripts, the hard work of slaves, the skills of craftsmen, and the sophisticated art of creators all contribute to the social structure and statehood of ancient Khorezm, represented by the sacred and noble monument of Toprak Kala.

Toprak Kala was not only the capital of the country, but also served as the central command post of the rulers, unlike Nisa, as a comparison. However, the significance of the Toprak Kala fortress lies in its structure, construction method, and importance. The culture of Toprak Kala is closely related to Mesopotamian structures. The construction of houses rising high above the surface and the majestic buildings of the fortress resemble the ancient eastern structures.

Museums of Karakalpakstan		
Savitsky Museum	State Museum of History and Culture of the Republic of Karakalpakstan	House Museum of Shamuratov Family
Berdakh National museum	Archaeological Collection	Open-air Museum (Ship Graveyard)
Ecological Museum of Muynak region	The Academy of Arts	Azatbay Otarbayev Musical Workshop

Source: The table is created by authors, based on data from Tourism Administration of the Republic of Karakalpakstan.

In the midst of the Arab invasion, Khorezm faced severe hardships, and during this period, the cities around Toprak Kala fell into decline, and life dwindled away. The cultivated fields dwindled sharply, craftsmanship and production declined drastically. Weakened by internal strife, the Khorezm state faced difficulties in defending its territory, succumbing to attacks from neighboring and nomadic tribes. All of these factors had an impact on the social and ethnic fabric of the Khorezmians.

Life continued within the walls of Toprak Kala and its surrounding defense walls until the end of the 6th century. In subsequent years, new secrets of the city are being uncovered.

The Ellik Kala District, through the establishment of the "Toprak-qala" cultural heritage area, can attract one million domestic and international tourists annually to the Republic of Karakalpakstan. Additionally, the Ellik Kala District provides an opportunity to create at least fifty new jobs, namely, these jobs are created based on historical and archaeological heritage. Moreover, the establishment of the ethnographic museum contributes to shaping the worldviews of students and higher education students in general education institutions, organizing ethnographic routes for tourism specialists, and providing assistance in practical activities. Furthermore, it can positively impact the preservation and popularization of natural and historical monuments.

Conclusion

The establishment of the Toprak-kala Historical Ethno-Museum in the Ellik Kala district of the Republic of Karakalpakstan marks a significant stride in harnessing cultural heritage to bolster tourism prospects in Uzbekistan. By meticulously organizing and showcasing the region's rich ethnographic tapestry, the museum stands poised to captivate both domestic and foreign tourists, offering a gateway to explore the diverse traditions, craftsmanship, and history of the area.

Drawing insights from international experiences in ethnographic museum organization, this article underscores the importance of leveraging best practices to elevate Uzbekistan's cultural landscape. By adapting and implementing positive aspects observed abroad, the Toprak-kala Ethno-Museum can further enrich visitor experiences and contribute to the sustainable development of tourism in the region.

As keywords such as civilization, tradition, tourism resources, and ethnographic tourism underscore, the museum's role transcends mere preservation—it serves as a beacon of cultural appreciation and understanding. Through initiatives promoting traditional craftsmanship, ethnic objects, and rural tourism, the museum can foster a deeper connection between visitors and the region's cultural heritage, fostering respect and appreciation for its diverse ethnicities and traditions.

In conclusion, the Toprak-kala Historical Ethno-Museum holds immense promise as a catalyst for cultural preservation, tourism development, and community engagement. By nurturing collaboration between stakeholders, harnessing local labor resources, and embracing innovative approaches, it can pave the way for a vibrant and sustainable future, where the richness of Karakalpakstan's heritage shines brightly on the global stage.

Literature review

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