

## ON THE ISSUE OF STUDYING THE KARAKALPAK EPIC

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### ***Annotation***

In the modern world, the issue of revival, preservation and promotion of national traditions, among which great importance is attached to the musical heritage, is becoming increasingly relevant. In world science, until now, dastans have been analyzed on the basis of the criteria and norms of philology, aesthetics, and literary criticism. On this basis, musical scientific hypotheses are popularized on the study of musical science, namely, the musical culture of Central Asia, the spiritual heritage of oral folk art, dastan art, and the direction of traditional performance at an international level.

**Key words:** oral folk art, dastan art, Epos, Karakalpak folk culture, tradition music.

### **Introduction**

The study of scientific, musical-theoretical, metro-rhythmic regularities of musicology, which necessitates the determination of the specifics of the national color by the mutual influence of meter and rhythm in the formed dastan melodies. Karakalpak epic musical creativity, its ethnogenesis, genre-stylistic, performing and musical features of dastans are one of the little-studied areas that require special scientific research in the field of

theoretical musicology.

"The primordial history and culture of any people are personified, first of all, with its oral art - folklore, folk epic and is an invaluable source in the preservation and development of national values and traditions" [1] makes the issue of studying oral folk art, which forms the basic basis of the Karakalpak people.

The epic as a whole goes back to ancient times, as evidenced by the preserved historical monuments of the ancient Turkic tribes. Here, for centuries, and sometimes for millennia, legends and traditions have been preserved in oral form, transmitted from generation to generation, from people to people. These monuments contain small texts on tombstones, which contain historical information about the rulers of the Eastern Turkic Khaganate.

An important source reflecting the aesthetic ideas of ancient Turkic literature and epos, including, is "Devonu lugatit Turk" ("Collection of Turkic dialects") by Mahmud Kashgariy written in 1073. Along with lexicographic comments, this dictionary includes samples of oral folk art and written poetry, which also contains excerpts from the heroic epic [6,32].

Of particular value are the manuscripts "Oguz-name" and "The Book of my grandfather Korkut" (Kitab-I Dede Qorqut) dating back to the 16th century, they contain the history of the fact that the manuscript "The Book of My Grandfather Korkut" dates back to the 16th century, the legends themselves cover an earlier period, namely the 9th-11th centuries. [8,517; 10.74].

In relation to this issue, the researcher of the Uzbek epic H. Zarifov notes that: "... the final design of these epic tales, as always, was preceded by their long existence in the oral-poetic tradition. The multi-tribal Turkic people of the Oghuz or Huns are mentioned in historical sources of the 6th-8th centuries. in the neighborhood with the Turkic Khaganate (in northwestern Mongolia); maybe even the Oghuz were part of it. Later, we find the Oghuz in the steppes of Central Asia, in the lower reaches of the Syr Darya and near the Aral Sea... This explains the existence of legends associated with the Korkut cycle, not only in the Middle East, but also in the earlier Central Asian homeland of the Oghuz" [9,13].

## Methods

The study, system-analytical, theoretical-historical, comparative-typological scientific methods were used.

The reliability of the results of the study is determined by the authenticity and representativeness of the source base studied by the author, including information about the Karakalpak epos, the introduction into scientific circulation of his own musical transcripts of dastan samples, as well as the use of proven research methods of modern musicology.

Epic heritage of the Karakalpak people are very multifaceted and ambiguous in their assessments. Based on this, this chapter sets the task of highlighting the following issues: the degree of study of the Karakalpak epic, the problem of its periodization, classification and features of the poetic basis, as well as the specifics of the musical language.

Which directly influenced the preservation of the general cultural, and, in particular, musical heritage in its original form. The position of A. Azimova is also significant, which rightly states: "... starting only from the beginning, from the roots, one can learn the laws of meaning formation" [2,5], which directly relates to the field of study we have chosen.

An idea of the general degree of study of the Karakalpak epic is given by a brief overview of the significant works of Russian and domestic scholars of folklore philologists.

Karakalpak folk music culture of the last century, as in many Central Asian countries, the role of Russian scholars of folklorists was great, who did a great job of collecting and publishing Karakalpak dastans, legends, proverbs, edifying words, etc. Until the 1920s, several variants of dastans were collected and published. The names of scientists A. Divaev and I. Belyaev, publication of the Karakalpak epic heritage, should be especially singled out.

The first version of the dastan "Alpamys", written down from Zhiemurat Bekmuhammetov - zhyrau from Turtkul - was published in 1901 in Tashkent. In the preface, A. Divaev notes that this dastan is of Kyrgyz origin. The reason for this judgment is that many words at that time were of common Turkic origin and still exist in the dialect of the Turtkul region of Karakalpakstan. K. Maksetov writes about this in detail: "A. Divaev, in his preface to Alpamys, recognizing that the executor of the epic is Karakalpak, noted, however, that "the language of the epic is replete with Persian and Arabic words."

In addition, recognizing zhyrau as a Karakalpak, he argued that Alpamys was allegedly a "purely Kyrgyz" creation ... it remains to express deep regret that he was unable to understand the features of this version and did not understand that he was facing the Karakalpak version. It should be noted that the Karakalpak version of "Alpamys" is of great interest to researchers of the epic.

First of all, it creates an idea of the linguistic features of the Karakalpak zhyrau at the end of the 19th century" [13,9]. The culture of the Karakalpaks was in close relationship with neighboring peoples: Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, Uzbeks, Turkmens, Tajiks, and many researchers did not particularly distinguish between them, which directly affected the occurrence of such inaccuracies in determining the ethnicity of dastans. After the dastan "Alpamys" in 1903, I. Belyaev recorded "Koblan", "Yusupbek", "Edige", "Shezhire", "Bibiraushan".

In 1930, a folklore expedition worked in Karakalpakia, led by S. Malov, in which Karakalpak philologists and folklorists took an active part. In 1934, K. Ayimbetov

recorded the dastans: “Edige” (from Yerpolat Zhyrau), “Alpamys” (from Ogiz Zhyrau), which were published in Moscow in 1937. The same version of the Alpamys epic was republished in 1941 in Tashkent.

In the late 1930s, the famous narrator Esemurat Nurabullaev (Esemurat Zhyrau) was recorded by the writer N. Zhapakov with the dastan "Koblan". In 1940, it was published by the Karakalpak state publishing house. In 1939, Amet Shamuratov from Kulemet Zhyrau recorded "Sharyar", "Er Kosai", "Kurbanbek", "Dəyletiyarbak", "Ersaiym". By 1949, a record of the dastan "Kyrk kyz" appeared.

Until the 1950s, individual dastans were recorded, and later variants of dastans began to be collected [13,12-13]. Particular attention in this period was attracted by the work of Kurbanbay zhyrau, from whose lips the dastans were recorded: “Khazhigirey”, “Zhazkelen”, “Erziyhar” and others, and also published - “Menlikal” (1956), “Erziyhar” (1958), “Kanshayym” (1958), “Kurbanbek” (1962).

In connection of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan in 1959, the Institute of History, Language and Literature was established. At this institute, the folklore sector began to function, which laid the foundation for the systematic study and collection of Karakalpak folklore. By this period, specialists had collected and recorded more than 20 epic poems. As K. Maksetov notes: “We managed to establish that there are more than 120 bakhshy and zhyrau in Karakalpakstan. Of course, the collected material is not the same in its artistic merit. However, it is a very valuable tool in research work” [13,13].

The main task of researchers was to collect and publish folklore samples, including dastans.

## Results

Based on the samples of Karakalpak folklore collected by folklorists and philologists, scientific research of Karakalpak scientists on the study of oral folk art and, in particular, the epic heritage, appears. These are, first of all, the works of K. Maksetov, K. Ayimbetov, N. Davkaraev, I. Sagitov and many others, where the issues of periodization, classification are touched upon to a certain extent and the features of the Karakalpak epic are revealed. The works of the aforementioned scientists constitute the main source base for the study of Karakalpak epic creativity.

N. Davkaraev’s study “Shygarmalyryrynyn tolyk zhyynagy” (Karaqalpaq adebiyaty tarijhynyn ocherklari T-2) [7] presents historical information about Karakalpak folklore, their performers, and analyzes epic poems.

According to N. Davkaraev, the appearance of Karakalpak epic poems such as "Sharyar", "Koblan", "Edige", "Er Shora", "Alpamys", "Kurbanbek", "Er Ziyhar", "Forty Girls" refers to XI –XVI centuries [7,92-102]. They have their variants among many Turkic-speaking peoples. Starting from the 18th century, the Karakalpak epic was replenished with such lyric-epic poems as “Maspatsha”, “Garip Ashyk”, “Yusuf-Ahmet”.

One of the significant works on the study of the Karakalpak epic is the monograph by I. Sagitov "Karakalpak heroic epic" [14]. In it, the author gives a general description of the Karakalpak epic, examines in detail the process of its appearance, performance, artistic features, and also touches upon the issues of classification and periodization of the epic. Separate chapters are devoted to the description and characterization of the epics "Qoblan", "Alpamys", "Kyrq kyz". Touching upon the issue of periodization of the Karakalpak epic, I. Sagitov notes that "the history of Karakalpakia, with the exception of oral epic works, has almost no data until the 18th–19th centuries." [14,35].

Focusing on the content of the epic poems and the historical data mentioned in them, the author subdivides two periods of the creation of the epic: the first "Nogayli" (XIV–XVI centuries), the second "Khorezm" (XVI–XIX centuries). According to I. Sagitov, the period of appearance of Karakalpak heroic dastans mainly refers to the Middle Ages, covering the XIII–XV centuries [2,89,35]. However, according to other researchers, the term dastan arose among the Karakalpaks not earlier than the 10th–11th centuries, and also in the works of Karakalpak folklorists, the time of occurrence of only a few dastans—"Alpamys", "Qoblan", "Gorugly", "Maspatsha" is determined.

Appearance of dastans raises many questions. They are complicated by the lack of reliable systematization in relation to the Karakalpak epic.

Touching upon the issues of classification, N. Davkaraev divides Karakalpak folklore as a whole into two main branches: epic and lyrical [7,77–98]. In our opinion, this kind of classification is associated with the features and period of the emergence of the epic.

According to I. Sagitov, dastans of heroic, lyrical, historical-legendary and fairy-tale content are distinguished in the Karakalpak epic heritage [14,25].

## Discussions

The artistic features of Karakalpak folklore and dastans as well. So, in addition to the issues of periodization and classification, N. Davkaraev dwells in detail on the role of the Karakalpak epic, its features and ideological content. The author emphasizes that the Karakalpak epic is exceptionally realistic, there are relatively few elements of fantasy in it.

So, for example, in the dastans "Alpamys", "Koblan", "Kyrq kyz" the struggle of folk heroes against foreign invaders is reflected, in the historical poems "Zamana", "Nogayly", "Ormanbet", "Poskan el" the events of XV–XVII centuries, which tells about the expulsion of the Karakalpaks from their native places and sounds of homesickness [7,77–98].

The result of many years of work of the scientist is his book "Folk Wisdom". It contains a complete list of genre varieties of Karakalpak folklore, their characteristics are given, valuable information about zhyrau and bakhshy is collected, and a genealogical map of performers - zhyrau and bakhshy is presented [3,8].



The author notes that a characteristic genre feature of dastans is their musicality. Karakalpak folk melodies performed on the kobyz reveal the national identity of the Karakalpak heroic epic. Dastan cannot be considered as a genre in isolation from performers. (translated from Karakalpak - B.Sh.) [12,6].

It is necessary to note the collective monographic work of philologists-folklorists - "Essays on the history of Karakalpak folklore", which was born in the late 70s of the twentieth century. K.Maksetov, K.Mambetnazarov, N.Zhapakov, A.Alimov, T.Nietullaev, A.Kozhybekov, M.Nizamatdinov, Zh.Khojaniyazov, U.Erpolatov, N.Kamalov took part in the creation of this work.

They were engaged in the study, collection and analysis of Karakalpak folk art, and the monograph presents the results of their research, provides valuable information about the genre composition, specificity, poetic and artistic features of folklore.

Karakalpak epic heritage performed by outstanding bakhsy and zhyrau have been preserved to date. Among them are such names as: Zhapak bakhsy Shamuratov, Amet bakhsy Tarikhov, Zhuman bakhsy Rozymov, Karazhan bakhsy Kabulov, Narbai bakhsy Koshekenov, Bekmurat bakhsy Zhumaniyazov, Abdireim Toraniyazov; Zhiemurat zhyrau Bekmukhammedov, Khozhambergen zhyrau Niyazova (Ogiz zhyrau), Kyyas zhyrau Kairatdinov, Esemurat zhyrau Nurabullaev, Arzymbet zhyrau, Kurbanbai zhyrau Tazhibaev, Tanribergen zhyrau Toreniiyazov, Karam zhyrau Nagymov, Kayypnazar zhyrau Kalimbetov, Zhumabai zhyrau Bazarov, Babaniyaz zhyrau Yeshimbetov. The texts of these records served as the basis for the publication of the 100-volume collection "Karakalpak Folklore" published in the last period (2007-2015) [11,54].

This multi-volume edition contains all the examples of folk art of the Karakalpaks, ranging from epic heritage to proverbs, sayings, edifications, etc.

Of the 100-volume edition of Karakalpak folklore, 45 volumes are occupied by dastans performed by zhyrau. Among them there are dastans of both heroic and heroic-romantic, heroic-mythological content.

Dastans performed from the zhyrau repertoire—Alpamys, Edige, Sharyar, Er Shora, Maspash, Er Sayym, Er Ziyhar, Bozugan, Karaman, Kurbanbek, "Kyz palzhan", "Kanshayym", "Amanbay batyr", "Bozzhigit", "Menlikal", "Shyirin Sheker", "Zhahansha", "Izzet kyz", "Ilimkhan", "Khazhy Gerey", "Salimkhan", "Yusup Mergen" is based on poetic and prose, and the dastans "Koblan", "Kyrk kyz", "Gulnazar", "Er Kosay", "Munlyk Zarlyk", "Gulistan", "Khattam-Tai", "Aydos Biy", "Bozaman" - have a poetic structure.

8 dastans, set out in the performance of the bakhsa - "Khurlikha Khamra", "Ashyk Nazhep", "Sayatkhan Khamra", "Garip Ashyk", "Kyrmandali", "Ayez Uylengen", "Arep Raihan" - have a poetic and prosaic structure. Unfortunately, as noted earlier, many musical recordings of dastans have not been preserved, and the available recordings are

presented in fragments.

So, V. Zhirmunsky, Kh. Zarifov, touching upon the issues of the general structure of the epic in a joint study on the Uzbek heroic epic, argue that “the principle of alternating poetry and prose is essential for the style of the dastan. Poetry parts are sung to the accompaniment of dombra or kobuz, prose ones have an effect.

This is evidenced by the Kyrgyz "Manas" and many Kazakh and Siberian epic songs, using only verse" [9,437].

With regard to the Karakalpak epic heritage, it can be assumed that the Karakalpak dastans that have survived to this day appeared in different periods of historical formation, and their internal structure suggests that mixed poetic-prose types are more ancient, and poetic, respectively, later.

K. Maksetov, characterizing the compositional features of the Karakalpak epic, notes: “In the Karakalpak dastans, poetry and prose are equivalent, since they constitute an inseparable unity. There is no doubt that they appeared at approximately the same time” (translation from Karakalpak - B.Sh.) [12,47].

The above statements are evidence of a reverent attitude towards the performance of the epic, in which the canonical laws dictated by the tradition of epic creativity are strictly observed.

Considering the multi-volume edition of the Karakalpak folklore, one can be convinced that zhyrau perform dastans of heroic, historical-heroic, heroic-romantic, heroic-mythological content, and bakhsy - of lyrical-epic content.

The epic heritage of the Central Asian peoples have much in common and are connected, as mentioned, with the ancient epic monument “The Books of My Grandfather Korkut”. As I.Sagitov notes: "Many Karakalpak epic poems in their content, plot are very similar to the epic works of the Kazakh and Uzbek peoples." As an example, the epics "Alpamys", "Koblan", "Sharyar" can be cited. I.Sagitov notes the similarity of a number of episodes and images of the epic "Sharyar" with the Kazakh epic "Munglik-Zarlyk", "Maspatshi" and "Kyz Zhipek", which, undoubtedly, is reflected in the artistic and general compositional basis of the Karakalpak dastans.

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## Conclusions

- In general, despite the existing works of the Karakalpak folklore philologists are aimed at revealing the artistic, meaningful poetic foundations of only selected dastans.
- A number of questions also arise regarding the performing traditions of dastans by the Karakalpak bakhshy and zhyrau. In the studies of Karakalpak philologists-folklorists, it is noted that bakhshy perform dastans of lyrical content, and zhyrau of heroic content, although the modern practice of the performing tradition of the Karakalpak epos indicates the absence of such restrictions.
- Insufficient information about such dastans as "Kyrk kyz", "Er Shora" and many others is provided. In addition, most of the studies are aimed at examining heroic dastans.

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