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ON THE ORIGINS OF THE MUSICAL ART OF THE KARAKALPAK PEOPLE

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Abstract

Objective: to identify the origins of the musical art of the Karakalpak people, which is the result of a long and complex interaction of the local tradition with ancient and medieval cultures, as evidenced by numerous archaeological excavations, among which the archaeological sources found in Toprak Kale are of great importance.

Methods: the musicological method of genre-style analysis and the musical-historical approach. Results: The musical art of the Karakalpak people takes its roots from ancient and medieval cultures, incorporating elements of various cultural traditions that they have encountered over the centuries. The Karakalpaks live in the territory located in the Aral Sea region, along the Amu Darya and Syr Darya Rivers, and their culture has been reflected in historical events and interactions with neighboring peoples. The historical foundations of musical art date back to ancient times, as evidenced by numerous archaeological excavations conducted over the years by many expeditions, including the Khorezm archaeological and ethnographic expedition led by the legendary researcher S. P. Tolstov.

Scientific novelty: the article analyzes and examines archaeological finds related to archaeological excavations in Karakalpakstan, which provide important evidence of musical art.

Practical significance: the main provisions and conclusions of the article can be used in modern music teaching practice, namely in courses on studying the musical heritage of Central Asian countries.

Keywords: folk music, musical creativity, musical instruments, dutar, syrnai, murals

Introduction

The musical art of the Karakalpak people takes its roots from ancient and medieval cultures, incorporating elements of various cultural traditions that they have encountered over the centuries. The Karakalpaks live in the territory located in the Aral Sea region, along the Amu Darya and Syr Darya Rivers,

and their culture has been reflected in historical events and interactions with neighboring peoples.

The historical foundations of musical art date back to ancient times, as evidenced by numerous archaeological excavations conducted over the years by many expeditions, including the Khorezm archaeological and

ethnographic expedition led by the legendary researcher S. P. Tolstov.

These studies show that the ancient traditions of musical creativity of the Karakalpaks have deep roots going back in the past. Research shows that there are elements in the regional traditions of music and poetry that can date back many centuries. The use of natural instruments such as horns or percussion is evidence of how musical art developed in fusion with agricultural and nomadic cultures.

The results of the study

Musical creativity received its further development in the medieval period and was reflected as a special influence in modern art. In the Middle Ages, especially with the development of the Great Silk Road, the musical traditions of the Karakalpaks were enriched with elements of Persian, Arabic and Turkic cultures. These were times when trade routes facilitated the exchange of not only goods, but also cultural practices.

Music has become an important part of communication and rituals, strengthening the identity of the people. As noted above, archaeological finds related to archaeological excavations in Karakalpakstan provide important evidence of musical art. Finds of musical instruments such as:

- The dutar is a two-stringed instrument often used in folk music.
- Syrnai is a traditional wind instrument that also has a place in musical practice.

These instruments, discovered during the excavations, confirm that the musical culture of the Karakalpak people was diverse and multifaceted. Referring to the research carried out in Toprak-kale, an ancient city located in the territory of the Ellikalinsky district of the modern Republic of Karakalpakstan, it should be noted that it was one of the capital cities of the Khorezm state in the I–IV centuries of our era.

Numerous remains of architectural structures, including palaces, temples and other public buildings, have been preserved in this archaeological site. Among the most interesting finds on the territory of Toprak Kala is a building that may have served as an amphitheater or theater. Although this building is badly destroyed, archaeologists suggest that it was used for public spectacles and rituals,

which is typical for developed cities of that time. Such theatrical and spectacular structures were rare for ancient Khorezm architecture, which makes this find especially important for studying cultural influences and urban life in Khorezm.

Toprak Kala provides a unique insight into the cultural and artistic life of ancient Khorezm, and archaeological finds such as an amphitheater and wall paintings play a key role in understanding this heritage. Murals appeared in most of the rooms, apparently in all living and formal rooms. Of the rooms opened in 1946, room No. 5 on the second floor, facing the northern courtyard of the castle, was especially richly decorated. It was a huge hall with a flat ceiling supported by four columns, which was obviously ceremonial in nature. Its walls were decorated with magnificent ornaments representing a system of crisscrossing stripes of black and yellow tones, decorated with hearts, rosettes and acanthus leaves and forming rhombic fields used for picturesque images of musicians.

One of them has been preserved almost entirely: this is an elegant image of a harpist, made in yellowish tones. The fingers of several elaborately shaped hands in bracelets rest on the strings of a large triangular harp, reminiscent of Assyrian ones. The roundness of the shoulders and the oval of the face, the whole graphic solution of the image leads us into the world of Kushan-Gandhara artistic traditions: the harpist of Toprak-kala is a picturesque replica of the musicians of the Ayr-tam frieze. Two other fragments of images of women's faces found in the same room, especially one of them – the upper part of the face turned into a full-face, with a bold solution of straight-looking, wide-slit eyes and fused eyebrows – leads us into the world of other artistic associations. Parallels here should be sought in the Syro-Egyptian, partly northern Black Sea fine art of the Roman period and in the images of the art of the ancient Mediterranean. Thus, in the paintings of one room, two art schools and two traditions intersect, which, however, received a completely peculiar refraction on Khorezm soil.

Among the found fragments of the painting of this room, musical instruments are represented by the image of a small double-sided tom-tom drum in the shape of an hour-

glass. In 1947 In the rubble of the room under the “harpist’s room”, a fragment of a painting depicting a hand holding the neck of a two-stringed instrument of the dombra type was found that had fallen from above from this room. Apparently, on the whole, the painting of the room corresponded to the content of the Ayrtam frieze, solving the same problem with pictorial means. The room had other decorations. Numerous fragments of molded clay (with an admixture of wool) garlands of leaves and fruits, colored green, saffron and red, were found near its western wall, as well as a huge, one and a half times larger than normal hand of a high-relief image of a man resting his fingertips on some rectangular-rounded object – a gesture., well-known from the images on the coins of Kushan kings Vima Kadfiz and Kanishka.

Fragments of a harp found during excavations at Toprak Kale emphasize the importance of music in the lives of people of that time, and also show the skill of ancient artisans in creating musical instruments. Their findings allow researchers to better understand the social and cultural aspects of life in ancient times, including rituals, festivals, and other aspects of social life. The images of harpists and the musical instruments themselves give an idea of how music could be combined with other art forms such as painting and sculpture, as well as the importance it had in the culture and religion of ancient peoples. The harpist and her companions open the door to the most difficult world of ancient art for a researcher to access – the world of music.

We know the role that the classical Khorezm music school played in the history of the musical culture of the peoples of Central Asia in the late Middle Ages and modern times. And the elegant image of a harpist with an “Assyrian” instrument in her hands is a new link in the chain of links between the ancient Khorezm civilization at its origins

and the Near Asian world, which we have traced above, and, at the same time, a precious monument to the prehistory of the high musical culture of later, medieval and modern Khorezm.

One of these unique sites is the Toprak Kala settlement, which is located in the Ellik-kalinsky district of the Republic of Kazakhstan, among the numerous ruins of ancient fortresses.

Conclusions

Toprak Kala provides a unique insight into the cultural and artistic life of ancient Khorezm, and archaeological finds such as an amphitheater and wall paintings play a key role in understanding this heritage. Studies of frescoes and other artifacts at the

Toprak Kala settlement allow scientists and researchers to better understand the history of Karakalpak musical art, its origin, evolution and connection with other art forms. The relationship between the Toprak Kala amphitheater and the music of the Karakalpaks allows us to imagine what cultural and musical events were like in ancient times and how music accompanied various events and rituals.

The reflection in modern culture of the modern musical art of the Karakalpak people actively preserves and develops traditions based on historical heritage. Music plays a central role in rituals, celebrations, and other social events. Master musicians pass on knowledge and skills from generation to generation, which testifies to the deep roots of musical art in the culture of the Karakalpaks.

Thus, the musical art of the Karakalpak people is the result of a long and complex interaction of the local tradition with ancient and medieval cultures. Archaeological finds confirm the richness and diversity of this heritage, which continues to live and develop in modern times.

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