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THE THEORY OF "LATOIF" IN KUBROVIY AND MELODIC DRAMATURGY IN THE ART OF KHOREZM DASTANS

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Abstract

This article explores the syncretic relationship between the theory of "latoif" (the symbolism of form, color, and sound) of Najmiddin Kubro, the founder of Kubrovia, and changes in musical tone and performance style in the Khorezm school of dastans. It provides a scholarly analysis of the reflection of spirituality in mysticism, the vocal registers of bakhshi performance, and the dramaturgy of instrumental melodies and rhythms.

Keywords: *Kubrovia, latoif, Najmiddin Kubro, Khorezm dastan art, bakhshi, melodic dramaturgy, vaj, vocal tessitura*

Introduction

The history of the spiritual culture of the peoples of Central Asia shows that the Sufi orders determined the aesthetic foundation not only of religious and philosophical thinking, but also of professional and folk oral musical creativity. In particular, the Kubro order, which has taken root in the Khorezm oasis, is distinguished by its transcendental and practical-psychological views. The work "Favoih al-jamol va favotih al-jalol", which describes the spiritual searches of the founder of the order, Sheikh Najmiddin Kubro, and his philosophical conclusions, explains the stages of the ascension of the human spirit through a unique system of visual and auditory symbols – latoif.

Today, at the intersection of musicology and folklore, one of the urgent tasks is to

study the internal dramaturgy of the art of epic not only in terms of musical regularities, but also in the context of mystical systems that shaped the worldview of the people of the oasis. Because the spiritual expression in the performance of the Khorezm epic, the sharp changes in the tone system, and the trance (inner experience) state of the bakhshi during the performance are directly consistent with the stages of spiritual journey ("say-ri suluk") in Kubrov.

Main part

1. The "Latoif" System in Kubrov and its Acoustic-Symbolic Essence

According to the philosophy of Najmiddin Kubro, the human body contains spiritual organs – "latoif" (subtle feelings and spiritual centers), which are revealed in the form of

certain colors, shapes and sounds during the spiritual ascension of the righteous. Kubro evaluates these states as the reflection of divine rays in the mirror of the soul. As Professor Najmiddin Kamilov noted, in Kubroism, color and tone are not just an aesthetic element, but an ontological reality of the soul in a certain ontological status.

During the suluq, the righteous first observes the rays of darkness (black), then the green light representing repentance and the awakening of the soul, the yellow and red lights indicating sincerity and enlightenment, and finally the white and colorless light ("nurul-anvar"), which is a symbol of absolute truth. Importantly, these visual changes are always accompanied by internal acoustic processes – hidden sounds, soulful melodies ("shig'irtma" or divine murmurs). This situation created the basis for the synthesis of words, melody, and the spiritual vibrations of the performer in traditional epic poetry.

2. Dialectics of Tone Shifts and Color Symbolism in Epic Poetry

In the Khorezm school of epic poetry, in particular in the "Gorogli" series of epic poems, the melodic dramaturgy has a complex and staged structure. In the process of telling the epic poem, the bakhshi changes the singing tone (tessitura) and the system of the darsgor (parda) according to the development of events. This process can be analyzed in a comparative parallel to the stages of the Kubroviylik as follows:

- The introduction to the poem and the low register (the state of Darkness and Repentance): The performance of the poem usually begins with the bakhshi's low, low-pitched "humming" simulated throat voice or a melodious mudakkim on the lower frets of the durtar strings. This situation corresponds to the darkness of the soul at the beginning of the Kubroviylik leech and the static state of the heart on the verge of awakening (the black and dark blue stage).
- Climax and high register / "Double stroke" (Spiritual ecstasy and Red/Yellow light stage): When the heroic and romantic-ecstatic scenes begin in the epic plot, the bakhshi switches to the "open voice" style and rises to a higher

tessitura, while in the performance of the durtar, the "double stroke" method is activated. This sharp rise in tone, the inner excitement of the epic poet, and the dynamics of the tone that amazes the listeners are similar to the state of the heart's excitement ("tajalliyy") and the manifestation of yellow-red flame colors described by Kubro. If this state of the bakhshi is called "the arrival of the fairies of inspiration" in folklore, in Sufism it is called "vajd" (ecstasy).

3. The Structural Influence of "Latoif" in the Dramaturgy of Instrumental Melodies

In Khorezm epics, not only the melodies associated with the words, but also the instrumental melodies between the epics (for example, special raddas for the durtar or harmonium) carry an important dramatic load. In the Kubrov style, the movement of forms (circle, triangle, straight line) in the mental image is explained. From the point of view of musicology, the rhythmic structure of the Khorezm epic melodies and the technique of "nolish" (glissando) are the musical expression of precisely those geometric-mental forms.

When the bakhshi durtar is struck, the linear development of the sound transitions to a circular (rotational) movement (especially in repeated beats). This repeats the mystical cycle of remembrance and the spiral trajectory of the soul's ascent. As noted in the research of B. Matyokubov, the melodies developing along the bakhshi line spiritually prepare the listener for a state of trance.

4. The Acoustic Phenomenon of the Throat Voice and the Status of "Sound" (Sound) in Kubrovism

In the Kubrovian tradition, the control of breath ("restrained breath") and the transition from the tongue to the heart play a special role in the process of remembrance and spiritual practices. According to the works of Najmiddin Kubro, on the eve of the awakening of the soul, symbolic sounds and humming that do not exist in nature begin to be heard in the inner world of the righteous. This divine acoustics is considered a sign of surrender and the opening of the door to truth in Sufism. If we pay attention to the tradition of Khorezm doston performance, the "inner voice" or throat voice (hum) –

one of the oldest and fundamental elements of Bakhshiism – is precisely the artistic and musical manifestation of this spiritual acoustic process. Before and during the telling of a dostan, the bakhshi tunes himself and the listener to a certain internal rhythm through a rhythmic humming (sometimes called “gurgling”) that comes from deep in the throat, without words.

From a musical-acoustic point of view, the throaty voice and moans (glissando) use the lowest capabilities of the human vocal apparatus to simultaneously create both the main tone and higher overtones (additional hidden sounds). This situation is functionally identical to the practice of pressing the tongue to the palate and reciting the name “Allah” from the depths of the heart in the Kubroviylik. This melodic dramaturgy in epic poetry is not just melodiousness, but also serves as an acoustic bridge that separates the listener’s psychology from the material world and leads him into the reality of the epic, that is, the metaphysical world.

5. The Rhythmic Structure of the “Qo’sh zarb” and the Dynamics of “Wajd” (Ecstasy) in the Tariqat

The Khorezm epic performance has its own rhythmic complexity, which is mainly manifested in the system of beats in the dutar performance. The “double beat” method, used at the highest point of the development of events, that is, in the spiritual evolution of the hero or in dramatic battle scenes, is the main engine of the melodic dramaturgy.

In the Kubroi sleuth, the states of “excitement” and “ecstasy” (spiritual excitement and forgetting of one’s own identity) are considered decisive turning points in the spiritual journey of the righteous. Najmiddin Kubro in his treatises likens the movement of the soul in a state of ecstasy to a raging fire or a raging sea. Bakhshi’s transition to “double beat” is precisely the instrumental-rhythmic model of this spiritual excitement.

6. The Tradition of Master-Discipleship: The Typological Closeness of the “Khirqa” and “Fatiha” Institutes

One of the strongest links between Kubrovism and folk art, especially epic poetry, is the system of mentor-discipleship (irshod). In the Kubrovism order, a disciple (murid) cannot receive spiritual permission until he

is educated by a mentor (murshid) and is deprived of the right to wear the “khirqa”, the symbol of the order. Najmiddin Kubro’s work “Al-usul al-ashara” describes in detail the dangers of entering the leek without absolute loyalty to the sheikh and the permission of the mentor. The same strict hierarchy and sanctity are preserved in the Khorezm school of bakhshi. According to art and folklore studies, a young man serves for years under the guidance of a mentor bakhshi, learning the melodic system, texts, and internal “secrets of performance” of epic poems. The process is legitimized through the following two sacred stages:

1. Ijozat (Permission, Giving of Fatiha): Just as a murid receives a letter of guidance or fatiha from his master sheikh, a young bakhshi receives a white fatiha from his master in public after mastering all the dostans and melodies. Until the master gives the fatiha, the bakhshi’s independent circle-making and reciting of dostans is strictly prohibited in the ethics of the oasis and is considered a sin.

2. Transfer of a symbolic item (Dutar / Khirqa transfer): While in the Tariqat, the master’s putting on his robe (khirqa) by his disciple signifies spiritual succession, in dostans, the master gives his dutar or personal instrument to his disciple. This is not just a material gift, but a symbolic confirmation that the spiritual legacy of the master, his world of melodies and performance power has been transferred to his disciple.

The typological similarity between these systems clearly demonstrates how closely the art of epic and bakhshi poetry in the Khorezm oasis was integrated with the mystical kha-nokakhs and the environment of the order in the Middle Ages, and how its aesthetic and social laws were formed precisely on the basis of the Kubrovian code of ethics.

Conclusion

Sheikh Najmiddin Kubro’s theory of “latoif” is one of the most perfect concepts showing the acoustic and visual connection of the philosophy of Sufism with the human psyche. A comparative analysis of this theory with the changes in tone, the dramaturgy of voice registers and instrumental performance in the Khorezm school of epic poetry shows that folk music is not just an enter-

tainment tool, but a musical transformation of the deep philosophical-mythological and mystical worldview of the people. The series of melodies in the epics performed the func-

tion of a kind of “sairi leech” that led the listener from spiritual darkness (low register) to light and spiritual purification (high veil and final peace).

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