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## THE MUSAKHADZHAYEV DYNASTY'S CONTRIBUTION TO VIOLIN CULTURE IN KAZAKHSTAN

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### Abstract

This article explores the Musakhadzhayev musical dynasty and their substantial contribution to the advancement of string performance culture in Kazakhstan at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries. It highlights their pioneering role in establishing the Kazakh National University of Arts in Astana, now rightfully regarded as one of the nation's premier musical institutions. The Musakhadzhayev sisters deservedly hold key positions in the pedagogical and concert spheres of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

**Keywords:** *violin, Kazakhstan, conservatory, pedagogue, performer, art, culture, music*

Research into the Musakhadzhayev family archive reveals that their ancestry included not only accomplished musicians but also passionate amateur music enthusiasts across various branches of the family.

Archival materials, presented here for the first time and currently held by the eldest sister, Raisa Kozhebekovna Musakhadzhayev, offer compelling new evidence *that the sisters inherited their musical talent from both their mother's side and their father's lineage, including his brother, Moldabek Musakhadzhayev* (Moldabek Musakhadzhayev is buried in the Zaronovo Memorial near Vitebsk, Belarus. It has become a sacred family tradition to visit this memorial annually, as their uncle was considered missing in action for over forty years. While a postgraduate student at the Leningrad Conservatory, Raisa traveled to Moscow to the Central

Military Archive of the USSR and submitted a request regarding her uncle. The response arrived only in 1988), a musically gifted individual who mastered several instruments.

The talented Aiman and her sisters were destined to be born into a family without professional musicians, yet their parents were great music enthusiasts. Their father, Kozhabek Musakhodzhayev, was an agronomist who graduated from an agricultural technical school in Almaty and the Agricultural Academy in Moscow. Their mother, Rakhilya Dutbaeva, was a professional alpine skier who achieved high placements in various competitions. However, both sides of the family possessed musical genes that manifested in the talent of all four sisters.

Among the quartet of the Musakhadzhayev sisters, two violinists and a cellist paid homage to string instruments, while the mid-

dle sister, Raushan, a player of the kobyz, focused on the Kazakh folk instrument known as the prima-kobyz, which has four strings.

The artistic formation and development of this exceptionally gifted individual (who would later become a prominent figure in culture) is evident from her very first steps. Cultural traditions within the family, particularly those of the parents and the surrounding environment, often play a significant role in this process. Many talented young people from various republics of the former USSR faced different paths in their pursuit of a profession.

The path to musical stardom often involved opportunities to receive guidance from prominent professors of leading conservatories in Moscow and Leningrad, who traveled to the capitals of various republics to scout for exceptional talents. A more structured route involved studying with renowned musicians who were either sent to these republics on assignment or chose to settle there permanently. Less frequently, future stars emerged through their own innate brilliance, displaying early signs of natural talent, perfect pitch, and unwavering dedication to daily practice, which quickly became the defining purpose of their young lives. This latter scenario is particularly fitting for *Aiman Musakhadzhayev, a girl from the Kazakh heartland who rose to become a leading figure in the world of violinists*.

This article aims to shed light on the years of study undertaken by Aiman Musakhadzhayeva and her sisters at various conservatories: Moscow (Aiman and Bakhytzhan), Leningrad (Raisa), and Alma-Ata (Raisa and Raushan). The documentary source material will consist of documents from A. K. Musakhadzhayev's personal file, held in the Archive of the Moscow Conservatory, as well as the recollections of members of this remarkable family of four Musakhodzhayeva sisters, where the eldest, Raisa Kozhebekovna, took on the responsibility of collecting, preserving, and recording important facts about the creative journey of these talented musicians.

The Musakhadzhayev sisters have rightfully earned prominent roles in the pedagogical and concert landscape of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Aiman is a celebrated soloist, the founder and first rector of the Kazakh National University of Arts (KazNUI),

and a pivotal figure in the establishment and rapid growth of the institution. Raisa is a renowned violin pedagogue. Raushan was the pioneer performer of works for the four-stringed prima kobyz. Bakhytzhan serves as the principal conductor of both the "Academy of Soloists" State Chamber Orchestra and the Kazakh State Symphony Orchestra, the latter co-founded with Aiman.

Beyond their exceptional natural talent and work ethic, the Musakhadzhayev sisters have rightfully earned prominent roles in the pedagogical and concert landscape of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Aiman is a celebrated soloist, the founder and first rector of the Kazakh National University of Arts (KazNUI), and a pivotal figure in the establishment and rapid growth of the institution. Raisa is a renowned violin pedagogue. Raushan was the pioneer performer of works for the four-stringed prima kobyz. Bakhytzhan serves as the principal conductor of both the "Academy of Soloists" State Chamber Orchestra and the Kazakh State Symphony Orchestra, the latter co-founded with Aiman.

Girls possessed a rare gift: like tiny stars, they energized and inspired one another. Raisa, the eldest, was the first to show an interest in music. According to her recollections, radio and television played a significant role in their early exposure. It was through these mediums that the older girls first encountered and became fascinated by various instruments, particularly the violin. They diligently imitated the instrument, even using two sticks found in the garden to create their own imagined school duet.

All the sisters (When Raisa was in the fifth grade, N. M. Patrusheva asked, "Do you have a younger sister? Show her to me." That was Aiman) dedicated their lives to string instruments. Aiman Kozhabekovna recalls her first impression of Professor Nina Mikhailovna Patrusheva, who captivated her immediately and forever. "For her students, Nina Mikhailovna became not only a teacher but also the closest friend... Nina Mikhailovna is a teacher sent from God. Her pedagogical style is characterized by high professionalism, an intelligent approach to lessons, methodical teaching, and the ability to engage students, as well as a systematic approach and a striving for perfection"

(Zhumabekova, Zh.Zh., & Musakhodzhaeva, S.K., 2007, p. 20).

During her studies at the K. Baiseytova Music School, Aiman attracted the attention of various teachers, classmates, and peers. Nina Mikhailovna Patrusheva recalled Aiman's education at the Kulyash Baiseytova School: "At the age of seven, Aiman was brought to the Republican Music School for Gifted Children named after K. Baiseytova, and she 'held' her own during the entrance exams with all the other children. I remember Aiman sitting at the edge, very focused and attentive. She sang everything, and her musical abilities (rhythm, ear) were tested. But it was only after a month of our individual lessons that I realized this girl was exceptionally gifted. She demonstrated a good adaptability to the instrument. Her hard work, combined with her extraordinary talent, brought her success in international competitions... During her studies in my class, Aiman stood out from others with her immense diligence and great organization" (Zhumabekova, D.Zh., 2013, p. 33). This brief episode indicates that the young violinist was developing her performance will and self-confidence from the very beginning. This was further supported by her numerous performances at school in front of various foreign delegations and honored guests.

When Aiman Musakhadzhayeva was in the seventh grade in Alma-Ata (1973), the renowned composer Aram Khachaturian arrived for the premiere of his ballet "Spartacus." Yerkegali Rakhmadiyev, then Chairman of the Composers' Union of Kazakhstan, "called the school principal with a single question: whether any of the students played for the famous guest... After I finished playing, Khachaturian beckoned me with his finger, loudly inquiring if I had the score of his concerto with me. "You will become a famous musician. But always remember that hard work, patience, and tolerance are three things you need to achieve success" (Zhumabekova, D. Zh., 2005, p. 16). Aram Khachaturian enjoyed interacting with people, giving autographs, and taking photographs.

Unforgettable and precious for Aiman were the advice and consultations of Leonid Kogan, Volodar Bronin, David Oistrakh

(Maricheva, V., 2000), Valery Klimov, and Viktor Tretyakov. She gained much that was interesting and useful from meetings with outstanding professors M. Glizarova, T. Gaidamovich, V. Shebalin, T. Muller, V. Grigoriev, and others. These were her main musical universities. The years of study at the Moscow Conservatory left the deepest and most heartfelt memories in her soul, and, above all, of her mentors and teachers.

Throughout life and in their creative endeavors, the sisters inspire each other with creative energy. Initially, all four studied at the Kulyash Baiseitova Music School. They have always walked through life side by side, up to the present day, becoming leaders of the Kazakh National University of Arts, which was created with their active participation (Kuzembayeva, S.A., 2008).

A. K. Musakhadzhayeva has made a significant contribution to the promotion of Kazakh musical art in the global cultural space. Under her leadership as Rector of KazNUI (Kazakh National University of Arts) from 1998 to 2024, a generation of worthy musicians has been trained, now working in Kazakhstan and in various countries around the world. Over more than a quarter of a century, A. K. Musakhadzhayeva created a violin school in Astana, which made possible the birth of other centers of culture – new theaters, philharmonics, and orchestras.

The unifying role of the violinist-leader in the activities of the Musakhadzhayev dynasty is immense. Together with her sisters and their students, Aiman Kozhabekovna performed on the world's best stages, playing works such as "Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso" by C. Saint-Saëns, "Praeludium and Allegro in the Style of Pugnani" by F. Kreisler, and others. The culmination of any concert was the performance of the "Caprice" violin ensemble, led by Raisa Musakhadzhayeva, which performed "Navarra" for two violins by P. Sarasate accompanied by a symphony orchestra.

The four Musakhadzhayeva sisters are recognized musicians of international caliber. Children from all over the country come to study with them because all four are multifaceted: as teachers, public figures, and individuals with extensive experience interacting with the world's leading musicians.

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