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## **Turkic Traditions In Musical Culture Of Mordovian-Karatai Ethnic Group\***

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**Abstract.** *The Volga region is a unique polyethnic region of Russia, where the representatives of different peoples were in close interaction for many centuries, forming a unique layer of culture, which includes many components. An important role in this ethnic conglomerate belongs to the musical traditions embodied in folklore, musical instruments, ritual and festive performances, which make an important element of the ethnic culture identity for the indigenous peoples of the Volga region - Tatars, Russians, Mordvins, Chuvashes, Mari and Udmurts.*

*One of the most ancient Volga peoples, who made a great contribution to the development and the preservation of the region unique traditions is the Mordva. The representatives of the Mordovian people are divided into two local ethnic groups - Erzya and Moksha, and there are two local ethnographic groups in their composition - the Karatai Mordva (karatai) and the Tengushev Mordva (shoksha).*

*The article considers the musical culture of the Mordovian-Karatai, the development of which was influenced by the Finno-Ugric, Turkic and Slavic traditions of the Volga region of Russia. The role of external cultures in the development of the unique ethnic appearance of the Mordovian people turned out to be very significant and influenced the development of its unique musical culture in many ways, which, thanks to external factors, acquired a special form of assimilation, which is the synthesis of different national music-style components.*

**Key words:** Mordovian, Karatai, ethnic culture, song, folklore.

### **Introduction**

The ethnic group of Mordva-karatai resides in the Kamsko-Ustinsky district of the Republic of Tatarstan. Karatai look like Mordva and by self-consciousness they also consider themselves to be Mordvinians, but their colloquial speech is based on a special dialect representing the synthesis of Tatar and Mordovian languages. Karatai assert that this is their special language, which is not similar to Tatar, or Erzyan or Mokshan: "We speak our own language!". At the same time, they are baptized and honor the Orthodox traditions. Thus, this unique group, which has only about a hundred people, combines three ethnic strata of the Volga region - the Finno-Ugric, the Turkic and the Slavic.<sup>1</sup>

Previously this small nationality lived in three villages - Mordovian Karatai, Shershalan and Mensitovo. Nowadays, no one lives in the village of Shershalan, and with the emergence of the Kuibyshev reservoir in 1954, the inhabitants of the village of Mensitovo were moved to the Russian village of Zaovrazhnye Karatai, where several Karatai families still remained. At present, the village of Mordovian Karatai is the main keeper of the cultural traditions and language of the Mordovian-Karatai.

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<sup>1</sup> G.R. Stolyarova, T.A. Titova, L.S. Toksubaeva, *Ethnography of the peoples of the Volga-Ural region: textbook*, Kazan, KSU, 2007.

Ethnographic scientists are still proposing different versions on the issue of Mordvinian Karatai origin. Thus, V.N. Belitzer assumes that this is a local group of Mordva, of a mixed Erzya-Mokshan composition, which lost its language and adopted the Tatar language as the result of prolonged residence among Turkic-speaking peoples.<sup>2</sup> On the basis of collected materials H. Paasonen suggests that Karatai knew the Mordvinian language in the 17th century and preserved bilingualism for a long time. L.T. Mahmutova puts forward the version that Karatai is a small part of the Mordva, which lost its native language in the 16th century on the territory of its former habitat (Mordva-Karatais: language and folklore. - Kazan: IALI, 1991). After the study of the phonetic, morphological and lexical features of the Mordvinian Karatai dialect, L.Sh. Arslanov comes to the conclusion that their speech is an independent (local) dialect of the Mishar dialect of Tatar language, common in Mordovia and Penza region.<sup>3</sup> The information about various aspects of life, culture, customs, traditions, musical folklore of Karatai can be found in the works by L.B. Boyarkina, V.I. Rogachev, V.I. Romashkina, etc. The works by R.R. Zamaletdinov cover the issues of Tatar ethnic groups development on the basis of folklore materials, ethnographic, historical and linguistic data.<sup>4</sup>

An invaluable contribution to the preservation and the development of a distinct local ethnic group culture was made by its indigenous representative, the writer V.P. Andreev. He opened a rich inner world of a poorly studied language in the dictionary, trying to maximize the spelling of words to the original phonetically.<sup>5</sup> A.Sh. Yusupova points to the importance of language dictionaries development for the history and the culture of peoples.<sup>6</sup>

The first audio records of Karatai musical folklore were made by the ethnic music researcher M.N. Nigmedzyanov in 1960. In 1985, the records of individual Karataev's songs appeared based on the results of Hungarian scientist L.Vikar and G.Beretský expeditions. The folklorist G.M. Makarov wrote and studied musical folklore of Mordvinians-Karatai. The most significant work on the collection, decoding and notation of song samples collected during folk expeditions in 1980-ies was conducted by N.I. Boyarkin, V.I. Romashkin and A.I. Syreskin.

## Methods

They applied the methods of system and structural analysis of scientific cultural, musicological, folklore, and pedagogical literature in research. The generalization of own experience was carried out within the framework of the

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<sup>2</sup> T. P. Fedyanovich, "The research of the Finn language group peoples of the Volga and Ural regions by V.N. Belitzer. T.P. Fedyanovich," in *Ethnographic Review*, V (2004), p. 112-125.

<sup>3</sup> L. Sh. Arslanov, *The features of Mordovian-Karatai dialect - Mordva-karatai: language and folklore*, Kazan, IALI, 1991, p. 10-38.

<sup>4</sup> R. R. Zamaletdinov, F. Y. Yusupov, I. S. Karabulatova, A. F. Yusupov, D. H. Husnutdinov, "The formation of Tatars ethnic groups in the Southern Urals and Trans Urals region," in *Life Sci Journal*, XI (2014), no. 11, p. 214-217.

<sup>5</sup> V. P. Andreev, *The dictionary of Karatai language*, Kazan, Publishing House "The Word", p. 10-38.

<sup>6</sup> A. Sh. Yusupova, "Tatar Language Dictionaries of XIX Century as a Unified Historical and Cultural Phenomenon," in *World Applied Sciences Journal*, XXXX (2014), no. 2, p. 186-190.

problem under study. Empirical data were obtained during interviews, observations, conversations, audio and video recording.

### Results

The influence of the Turk-Tatar national genre-style and performing components on the development of Karatai musical culture based on Finno-Ugric roots is in the focus of our attention.

The conducted research showed that the great role was played by vocal music in the life of the Mordvins-Karatai, which always surrounded daily life, from birth to death: these are songs for children, and weeping, as well as the singing of songs at festivals, weddings, family celebrations, etc.

L.B. Boyarkina finds three main vocal-performing traditions of the Mordva in the vocal music of Karatai:

- singing (children's lullabies, jokes, single intonation of laments);
- joint ensemble or choral singing in polyphonic textures (common, long-term, epic, lyric, calendar, wedding);
- joint vocal-instrumental performance of songs.

As the researcher notes, these traditions reflect an original musical style of Mordovian people, its involvement in the Finno-Ugric culture, but at the same time they were imprinted by centuries-old ties with the music of Tatar and Slavic peoples.<sup>7</sup>

The main difference of the Mordovian-Karatai song folklore is that the verbal and poetic part of the songs is performed in Tatar language, and this undoubtedly caused the use of other artistic and visual and stylistic means of musical art and the borrowing of new musical and poetic genres. Karatai, divide all vocal music according to the duration of performance (long, short), to a specific place (street, table), destination (wedding, guest), which is characteristic for the classification in Tatar music: long (озын көй), short (кыска көй) street (урам көе), etc. Among other ethnic groups of Mordva, graduation is carried out according to poetic genres (lamentations, korylly, majestic), character of performance (long, short), and the personification of a bride's wines (addressed to a father, a mother, girlfriends).<sup>8</sup>

The transition to the Tatar language by Karatais led to the use of new musical and poetic genres characteristic of the Turkic peoples, such as the "Takmak", widespread not only in the Volga region among Bashkirs, Tatars, Chuvashs, but also among Kazakhs, Kirghiz ("takpak", "takpok"), among Khakas ("tahpah"). The ancient Turkic origin of this genre is proved by the use of the "barmak" metric system (the syllabic genus of versification based on the equal complexity of the verse lines with caesura dividing a verse into equal parts), known

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<sup>7</sup> L. B. Boyarkina (ed.), *Mordovian music encyclopedia*, Saransk, Mordov. publishing house, 2011, p. 215-216.

<sup>8</sup> V. I. Rogachev, *The wedding of the Mordvins of the Volga Region: Rite and Folklore / V.I. Rogachev // There on the Rav River ... (Mordovian of Tatarstan)*, Kazan, 2013, p. 36-39.

to the Turks since the pre-Islamic period.<sup>9</sup> In Tatar folk culture, takmak functions as a special form used in different contexts - it is labor chanting, and a verbal rhythmic accompaniment to dancing, and a humorous satirical song, a chastushka.<sup>10</sup>

We propose to consider a fragment of the takmak "Together in different ways" - "Алай да бергә-бергә, болай да бергә-бергә" (Example 1), written in 2014 by the authors of the article from the participants of the folklore ensemble "Mordovian Patterns" of Mordovian Karatai village (N.N. Nurgayanova's notation).

Example 1. The takmak "Together in different ways"

The melody of the presented takmak is characterized by simplicity, a clean form, the stability of the syllabic structure of the four-line stanza (8-7-8-7) with a clear rhyme (ABAB). From the point of view of the intonational language the presented sample has a clear ahemitonic intonational structure, manifested in a multi-voiced context; clear cadence turns are realized by three-fold fixation of the tonics. At the same time, takmak is not vocalized, but is spoken clearly, at a rapid pace, which is close to the specifics of the Mordvinian singing and performing style.

In ethnic-musicological studies, the song tradition of Karatais is defined in two words: the first one designates the type of a musical sample (long, short), and the second word is "жыр" i.e. "song". For example, such names as озын жыр (a long song), кыска жыр (a short song), урам жыры (a street song) mean that it is the song samples, which, as a rule, are performed by the choir in many voices. It should be noted that, Karatais often do not have fixed texts of songs for a certain melody like in some Tatar melodies.<sup>11</sup>

We propose to consider the fragment of a long song "If you say to sing we will sing" - "Жырларга да әйтсәгез – без жырларбыз" (Example 2) in general

<sup>9</sup> Z. N. Saidashevam, *The essays on Tatar music*, Kazan, Publishing house "Халкыбыз мирасы", 2015.

<sup>10</sup> G. R. Sayfullina G.H. Sageeva, *The categories of the Tatar traditional musical culture: annotated dictionary*, Kazan, Tatar publishing house, 2009.

<sup>11</sup> V. I. Romashkin, *Customs and musical folklore of the Mordva-Karatais - Mordva-Karatais: language and folklore*, Kazan, IALI, 1991, p. 85-104.

Nelya Kh. NURGAYANOVA, Svetlana V. KARKINA, Aleksandr V. GLUZMAN

containing more than ten couplets. The sample was written by the authors in the village of Mordovian Karatai in 2015 (the notation by N. Kh. Nurgayanova).

The image shows a musical score for a long song. It consists of six staves. The first two staves are vocal lines, and the last two are bass lines. The music is in a 4/4 time signature with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The lyrics are written in Cyrillic script below the notes. The lyrics are: "Ай, ди, жыр-ла - жыр-лар(ы)бы - з(ы) / Жыр-лар-га да айт-сә - гез, ай-ди, жыр-ла - жыр-лар(ы)бы - з(ы) / Ай, ди, жыр-лар - жыр-лар(ы)бы - з(ы) / мо-ң(ы)ла - р(ы) - га, я да вит, айт-сә - гез, без моң-ла - моң-лар-быз! / мо-ң(ы)ла - р(ы) - га, я да вит, айт - сә - гез, без моң-ла - моң-лар-быз! / мо-ң(ы)ла - р(ы) - га, я да - вит, айт-сә - гез, без моң-ла - моң-лар-быз!".

Example 2. Long song "If you say to sing"

It would seem that we see here typical musical-style components of Mordovian folk songs, namely, a singled out singing (1-2 cycles); a multi-voiced mode with a quarto-fifth ratio of the upper and lower voices; a word-break of the last word of the verse second line followed by its repetition (3-4 and 8-9 bars); the elements of the mobile bourdon in the lower voice.

However, along with this in this sample you can observe the bright musical and style components of Tatar music. Firstly, the Tatar poetic text of the song, which influences the structure and the rhythm of the verse, and the iambic music rhythm resulting from it; at that the assimilated rhythm of a poetic text influences the melodic change. Secondly, as well as in the long-drawn songs of Tatars, one can find here a special type of a song form - a multi-syllabic one with asymmetric caesura, chanting and additional vowels (ай, ди, я, да, вит). The poetic text of the song is interesting: "If you say to sing we will sing; if you ask for a melancholy melody (әйтсәгез моңларга) – we will sing (без моңларбыз)" - Here they use the concept of "моң" (literally "sadness", "melancholy") - an expressive performing technique with the use of melismatics and fine ornamentation, inherent in the Tatar genre of the long song "озын көй".<sup>12</sup> Thus, on the basis of performed theoretical and musical analysis, it can be found that озын жыр (a long song) of the Karatais is the synthesis of different national musical and style elements, in which the long-

<sup>12</sup> N. K. Nurgayanova, G. I. Batyrshina, L. A. Ahmetova, "Intercultural Interaction of the Volga Region Nations in the Context of Ethnomusical Traditions," in *Biosciences Biotechnology Research Asia*, XII (2015), p. 2795-2801.

lasting sound of the song pattern is accompanied by the inclusion of intrasyllable melodic chants.

Tatar lingering and short tunes influenced the style formation of the majority of musical instrumental jokes of karatais. In the old days traditional musical instruments that existed among the peoples of the Volga region, such as кубыз (jews'-harp), кypай (a longitudinal flute). They used various sound reproducing domestic objects existed in their villages: furnace flaps, buckets, knives, etc., but the Tatar accordion (тальян-гармун) occupied a special place.

### **Discussion**

At present, Karatais seek to preserve their customs for the history of musical art, but the number of inhabitants in the village of Mordovian Karatai is still decreasing ... During the folklore expeditions of 2014-2015 in the Republic of Tatarstan within the framework of the project RGNF "Ethnic Music Traditions of the Peoples of the Volga Region: the Pedagogical Aspect", the authors were fortunate enough to touch the unique phenomenon of ethnic-musical creativity. Due to the folklore ensemble "Mordovian patterns", functioning since 1987, of Mordovian Karatai village, led by Okuneva Irina Fedorovna (born in 1963) and the performers Anisya Petrovna Kudalova (born in 1928), Anna Petrovna Afimova (born in 1937), Chekmeneva Nina Petrovna (born in 1939), Afimov Fedor Yakovlevich (born in 1939), Maslova Alevtina Nikolaevna (born in 1956), Koludarova Vera Andreevna (born in 1961) we heard and recorded several samples of a special Karatai language.

It should be noted that this kind of rural folklore creative teams carry out the revival and the reproduction of folk art samples and this is an important form of people knowledge and values transfer to the future generations in the opinion of.<sup>13</sup> Thus, according to Muftakhutdinova D.Sh. and Khurtmatullin R.K., the samples of musical folklore preserve the historical memory of ethnic groups.<sup>14</sup> In scientific and pedagogical studies by,<sup>15</sup> it is said that these forms of social-cultural activity contribute to the revival of spiritual traditions. They are the source and the tool for a favorable cultural environment creation, and make an emotional impact on the mind, feelings and behaviour of people, their involvement in the world of culture, in the process of creation, development, preservation, dissemination and further enrichment of cultural values.

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<sup>13</sup> R. R. Imamova, N. V. Shirieva, I. F. Kamalova, "Social and cultural activities of a folk music ensemble: pedagogical aspect," in *The Turkish Online Journal of Design Art and Communication*, 2016, p. 3061-3066.

<sup>14</sup> D. Muftakhutdinova, R. Khurmatullina, 2015. The Historical Memory of The Tatar People in The Works of Musical Culture," in *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 2015, p. 379–382.

<sup>15</sup> L. A. Ahmetova, N. Kh. Nurgayanova, 2016. "Realization of Cultural Potential of Traditional Music of Kryashen Tatars," in *Global Media Journal*, II (2016), p. 1–6. URL: file:///C:/Users/User/Downloads/realization-of-cultural-potential-of-traditional-music-of-kryashen-tatars.pdf., accessed 12. 06. 2017; Z. M. Yavgildina, G. R. Murtazina, L. I. Salikhova, E. A. Dyganova, I. F., Kamalova 2016. "Shaping of a Musical Culture of Youth in a Small Town," in *Global Media Journal*, II (2016), p. 5.

### **Conclusions**

1. The analysis of traditional creativity with the identification of genre, style, metric-rhythmic features in the context of this folklore system existence, the nature of performance manner - monody or polyphony, allows one to trace the influence of the Turkic traditions on the development of the Mordvinians musical creativity.

2. The musical analysis of the presented samples of song folklore, the verbal and poetic part of which is performed in Tatar language, revealed the use of other artistic and visual and stylistic means of musical language, the borrowing of musical and poetic genres different from Mordovian musical traditions, among which the Turkic genre "Takmak" was spread.

3. Based on the mutual influence of the Turkic and Finno-Ugric traditions in the musical culture of the Mordovian-Karatais, qualitatively new samples of a long song appeared which originated from this ethnic group.

4. The preservation of ethnic-cultural traditions is currently facilitated by the creation of folklore groups, functioning in the areas of certain ethnographic groups' compact residence. Their creative activity contributes to the implementation of ethnic-cultural education process of children and youth through the revival and the reproduction of folk art forms.

### **Summary**

The spiritual, cultural, and economic life of a modern man develops in a multicultural, polyethnic and polyconfessional environment, in the process of interrelation expansion among peoples. In these conditions, the problem of unique cultural traditions preservation is especially actual among different peoples and local groups. Traditional oral music is the earliest kind of musical art, representing a naturally formed deep and truthful image of people, their character, psychology and worldview. Folklore produces original national forms, a system of artistic expressive means is developed, the historical memory of the people is preserved. The study of folk art is an important means of pedagogical influence on the younger generation.

It is not possible to cover all aspects and genres of musical creativity of the Mordovian-Karatais within the framework of one article, but with the examples presented above it can be seen that Karatais created their highly artistic and distinctive music in the course of historical development, differing in genre, melodic richness and original performance. Unfortunately, the rich ethnic-music traditions of the Mordovian-Karatais have not been sufficiently deciphered and published yet, and almost were not included in the work of contemporary composers.

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