



Shankhay Zhyrau is Famous Karakalpak Epic Performer

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Abstract

This article gives a brief overview on Shankhay zhyrau. The article also provides information about the development of the Zhyrau schools of Shankhay, a well-known Zhyrau who lived and worked in Bukhara and Navoi regions and made a significant contribution to the development of Karakalpak Zhyrau art.

Keywords: *Nurata, Shankhay Zhyrau; Bakhshi; Epic; Literary Heritage; Zhyrau School; Karakalpak Zhyrau Art*

Introduction

Karakalpak folklore and epic is a combination of various types and genres of mass verbal art. Folklore and epic later played an important role in the development of the Karakalpak classical and written literature, as one of the organic components of the national culture of the people.

Karakalpak folklore is rich and varied. Its numerous samples seem to compensate for the relatively insignificant ancient written monuments.

The genealogy of zhyrau goes back to the depths of centuries. The melodies of zhyrauan encyclopedia of music and artistic culture of the Karakalpaks. Kobyz as a musical instrument zhyrau with a harmonious melody and the art of zhyrau attracted the attention of many Turkic scientists such as Academician V. Zhirmunsky, Americans Elda Laude Tsirzhautes, Lawrence, I.R. Pikken, German K. Reichl, Turkish scientists Metin Ergun, Uzbeks Tore Mirza and F. Karamatly and others. Along with other points, they drew attention to the amazing way of performing Karakalpak zhyrau and recognized it as the most ancient type of epic storytelling.

Zhyrau is a literary heritage of the people with a kobyz in his hands, he sings epics, historical songs, tells the people about his dreams, sings samples of oral literature along with the kobyz, has a talented voice and a pleasant voice.

The Karakalpaks lived in different districts of the eastern regions before the various invasions of the Jungar tribes. That is why the art of Karakalpak zhyraus spread and developed in those regions, and talented singers and artists of their time grew up. One of the most famous artists of that time was

Shankhay zhyrau, one of the best performers of the epic “Forty Girls” after Jiyen Zhyrov. However, Karakalpak historical sources contain very little information about the Shankhay zhyrau.

Zhyrau was highly respected among the Karakalpak people. Together with the people, they vividly described the heroism of the sons and daughters of the people in defending the homeland. It has become a tradition for them to make disciples [1, p. 76].

According to professor K. Allambergenov, the history of Karakalpak kobyz and Zhyrau art dates back to ancient times. This is because the Karakalpaks originated in the 10th century in the lower reaches of the Amu Darya, the historical homeland of their present name, in the eastern part of the Aral Sea. The first steps in the history of ethnogenesis of our people go back more than a decade - to the prehistoric history of the Sak-Massaget community [2].

Karakalpak Zhyrau art has passed through many centuries to modern times. There were times when the zhyrau, its musical instrument kobyz, and the art of zhyrau in general developed to the highest peaks, and there were times when it was not interesting to anyone. As far as we know, in the 1930s and 1940s, the Soviet government forbade the performance of such epics as “Edige” and “Er Shora”. The Zhyraus who carried it out were persecuted and punished. Even in the pre-independence period from the 1950s, there were nihilistic views on such epics as “Alpamys” and “Koblan”. And such prejudices had a negative impact on the development of Zhyrau art for some time.

Zhyrau art developed in the post-World War II period under very difficult conditions. However, Zhyrau art has survived to this day. An example of this is the Upper Karakalpak Zhyrau School. The name Upper Karakalpak originated in connection with migration as a result of constant attacks on the Turkestan region. There was a high interest in the art of singing in these regions. Many talented singers have grown up there. Among them are Jiyen (muiten), Aituvar and Kabyl (kayshyly), Kulmurat (muiten), Shankhay (karamangyt), Yerbai and Bekmurat (keneges), Allanazar (aiylly), Fergana Boribay and Seitmurat pana (kepe), Kazakhbay (anna) and others. Several Karakalpak zhyraus spread their art.

Zhyraus mainly perform epics and termes. Basically, they perform heroic epics with a kobyz. Love epics are usually performed on the dutar by bakhshis. The zhyraus were with the people in difficult times, uniting the people with their sharp, touching words. They verbally described the courage of the sons and daughters of the people in defending the homeland. Discipleship is a tradition in the art of zhyrau. The art of the zhyrau was also formed by the skillful, artistic talent of the zhyrau.

The art of Zhyrau has a long history. It is formed as a result of the mutual harmony of word and melody.

The roots of Karakalpak Zhyrau art go back to the 14th century Korkyt ata (10th century) and Soppasli Sipira zhyrau. This art was later continued during the Nogai period by Asan kaygi (XV), Kaztugan zhyrau (XV), Dospanbet zhyrau (XVI), Shalkiyiz zhyrau (XVI), after then continued by Muyten zhyrau (XVII), Jien zhyrau (XVII) and Shankhay zhyrau (XIX).

One such artist is Shankhay zhyrau, one of the best performers of the epic “Forty Girls” after Jien zhyrau.

Shankhay (Dosmuhammed) Zhyrau was one of the great representatives of Karakalpak Zhyrau art. He was born in 1814 in Besapan, Muryntau valley. Shankhay’s name was Dosmuhammed, and his relatives called him Dosymbet. According to researchers, he is from the Mangyt tribe of Karakalpaks [3]. According to T. Kanaatov, Shankhay was an orator, poet, storyteller, bakhshi, composer and actor. It is also known that Shankhay was a well-known wrestler with a wrist and rider. If we look at the folklore, we can see that Shankhay played such instruments as kobyz, narkobyz, zhelkobyz, zhezkobyz, lakai, sherter, dutar, dombra, and whistle [4]. This shows that Shankhay is an artist in every way. It is also known that Shankhay was clearly literate.

According to the available information, Shanhkay Zhyrau performed epics such that “Kyrykkyz”, “Edige”, “Aitoldy”, “Gorugly”, “Alpamys”, “Kuntuumys”, “Dalliyaym”, “Kanshaiym”, “Kyrmandali”, “Auezkhan”, “Auez’s application”, “Auez is married”, “Arab Tangan”, “Raikhan Arab”, “Yusup-Ahmet”, “Malike Khayyar”, “Er Ahmet and Ernazar”, “Ravshan Khan”, “Shiyryn-Sheker”, “Er Ziyuar”, “Sarman Khan”, “Yusip Zliykh”, “Hurlikha Hamira”, “Sayathan Hamire”, “Layli Majnun”, “Tair Zaure”, “Er Toslik”, “Munlyk Zarlyk”, “Tolganai”, “Tolybai Synshy”, “Nuran”, “Er Kambar”, “Abat Batyr”, “Gulshanbag” and etc. Shanhkay also created such terms as “Aglar”, “Yaranlar”, “Ne kayir”, “Dombrya”, “Alai da alay”, “Desedi”, “Zhaksydy” and others. Zhyrau’s solo work “Shanhkay Zholy” (Shanhkaynama) has become famous over the centuries. Also he performed some melodies such that “Ayga shap”, “Jan-jan”, “Tan atar”, “Shanqayma”, “Sherbiyt”, “Tolqin”, “Ulli ziban”, “Kelte ziban”, “Hawjar”, “Koz aydin”, “Jirma bes”, “Kun shigar”, “Qara jorga”, “Ilgal”, “Hayyar”. And there is own style belongs to only Shanhkay.

Some aytys of Shanhkay zhyrau among the people has been preserved in its new and pleasant form. His quarrels with the rich man’s daughter, the quarrels with the poets of Syr Darya, and other quarrels testify to the fact that Shanhkay was a skilled improviser and composer. The well-known Karakalpak orator Zhumanbulbil (father of Ergesh Shayir) was also Shanhkay’s disciple. Ergesh Shayir also saw Shanhkay in his youth.

The most enthusiastic among the disciples of Shanhkay were Kurbanbay Koldas uly and the famous Zhyrau Jiyemurat Bekmuhammed uly. Shanhkay Zhyrau, who also had clairvoyance, fairly tested and evaluated his disciples. It is known that Shanhkay visited not only Tavelibay and Bukhara regions and the Upper Karakalpak, but also the Aral Sea region [5].

Shanhkay not only became acquainted with the works of famous ancient sages of the East, but also became acquainted with the works of the great representatives of Karakalpak literature Kunkhozha, Azhiniyaz, Berdak, Otesh, Sarybai [6, p.93] and through Shanhkay their works spread abroad. Well-known scientist T. Adambayeva’s book “Zhyrau namalary” emphasizes that the oral data themselves were a valuable legacy. This is because the informants themselves saw the famous bakshi Musa.

According to Kally Aimbetov, in some stories Khalmurat Zhyrau from Bukhara is called the son of Shanhkay Zhyrau. Karakalpak and Uzbek bakhshis lived in the area and exchanged repertoire. The zhyraus performed there are called “bakhshi”. Their oldest musical instrument was the kobyz, but in recent times the kobyz may have been replaced by the dombra. This is because kobyz is still found in some parts of Uzbekistan.

The repertoires of Uzbek and Karakalpak zhyraus in Bukhara and Samarkand have merged. Kurbanbay Zhyrau learned the epics “Shirin and Sheker” and “Er Ziyuar” from the zhyraus in Bukhara and sang them among the Uzbeks of Khorezm and Karakalpakstan. These epics were from the repertoire of Bukhara zhyraus. Uzbeks in Khorezm still call the Karakalpak Zhyrau “bakhshi.” The repertoire of Uzbek bakhshi in Khorezm is not performed by Karakalpak zhyraus, but by Karakalpak shamans. [7, p.80]

But the Shanhkay Zhyrau art has not been fully studied in folklore. There is still work to be done in this direction. Nurata Zhyrau school starts from Shanhkay Zhyrau. A kobyz song preserved in the folklore of Shanhkay Zhyrau reads:

Shanhkay Zhyrau sings

The stringed kobyz plays [8, p.40]

Shanhkay Zhyrau’s another name is Shauket. His poems about himself contain the following words:

Menin atim Shawket baqshi, Bir sozim bir sozimnen yaqshi, Yangiabad degen yaqshi jay, Besh eshkili katta bay, Jazda jegeni sarı may, Qısta júredi jarımay [8, p.41].	My name is Shauket bakhshi, One word is better than another, Yangiabad is a good place, Very rich man who has got five goats, Butter to eat in the spring, It does not work in winter.
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Yangiabad is the name of a place inhabited by Shankhay and similar zhyrau-bakhshi in the present day Kenimekh district.

Shankhay Zhyrau was a wonderful teacher who had his own way. He had several dozen disciples. Kurban baksy Koldas uly, Begmurat zhyrau Zhorabay uly, Nurabylla zhyrau and others followed in the footsteps of that teacher. Despite his high level of performance and high executive skills, Kurban Baksy is accounted nonprofessional baksy. According to people, Shankhay Zhyrau did not bless him. There is a legend about him.

Shankhay zhyrau has studied the works of such great poets as Alisher Navoi and Muhammad Fuzuli, well-known representatives of Eastern literature. He was able to use term and tolghaus from their methods while performing. However, improvisation predominates in Shankhay zhyrau. Professor Kalli Aimbetov was the first scholar to speak about Shankhay in his book, "Noble Karakalpaks". In the book "Wisdom of the People", he also spoke about Shankhay Zhyrau, the formation of the repertoire of Karakalpak demons in Khorezm, Bukhara and Samarkand.

Shankhay Zhyrau's voice becomes magical after midnight. It turns out that it can control people's imagination. Kurban Baksy is very interested in finding out the secret. One day he asked his teacher about this. But teacher did not answer. He asked again and again. Then Shankhay agreed to tell the secret of his amazing voice. But he made a condition. "Look at my head after midnight. Silence whatever you see. Be strong with your tongue," he said. The two went to a deserted place. Shankhay Zhyrau began to sing. At midnight, his voice grew louder, and a two-headed snake appeared over Shankhay's head. The Baksy shouted, "There is a snake on your head". Thus the condition is broken, and the disciple cannot keep his promise. Then Shankhay Zhyrau, offended, returned the Baksy without blessing.

Begmurat Zhyrau from Bukhara wrote the following poem for his teacher Shankhay (Shauket):

Sháwkettiń shákirti Qurban shayırdı, Hawazası kóp jerlerge jayıldı, Qaraqalpaq, ózbek, túrkmen, qazaq, Hátte tájikler de buğan qayıldı. Íqlas qoyıp júrer edim jasımnan... [9, p. 30]	Kurban poet became a student of Shauket, His fame spread to many places, Karakalpak, Uzbek, Turkmen, Kazakh, Even the Tajiks agreed. I would be attentive from an early age ... [9, p.30]
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Even when Shankhay Zhyrau died, Begmurat Zhyrau was very sad.

My teacher is Shauket,

He taught them to sing,

In the morning,

The camels whined.

People say that when Shankai Zhyrau died, there was an eclipse and camels cried.

He died in about 1884 in Amantubek, near Kenimekh. The body of the great Zhyrau was buried in the Kulshi Ata cemetery in the same area.

The long-standing relations between the Uzbek and Karakalpak Zhyraus around Samarkand and Bukhara require special study.

Shankhay was a contemporary of the poet Azhiniyaz, and the two were in constant contact. That is why Shankai knew many poems of Azhiniyaz. Kurban Zhyrau learned Azhiniyaz's poems from Shankai Zhyrau. Begmurat Zhyrau learned from Kurban Zhyrau. Begmurat Zhyrau's students Aidar Zhyrau Gulmurat uly and Kurban Zhyrau Nauryz uly sang Azhiniyaz's poems "Ayrilsa", "Zhaksy" and others.

According to the well-known Karakalpak folklorist Kabyl Maksetov, the ancestors of Shankhay Zhyrau were also Zhyrau. He had many disciples from the territory of modern Karakalpakstan, as well as in the Bukhara region [9, p.320]. He caressed his disciples. That is why his name "Master" is so popular. In addition to folk tales, he also recited many verses and poems.

Shankhay was also a little literate. The literacy of the Bukhara zhyraus, as well as the understanding of their word as a "book word" is known from the materials collected from the Karakalpak zhyraus.

Shankhay Zhyrau was a legendary musician like Paganini among the Karakalpak people. He learned the epic "Forty Girls" from Kalmurat Zhyrau and performed it for many years. He continued the traditional method of Karakalpak zhyrau-bakhshi. Shankhay had his own individual style. Therefore, he is known as the author of the text and music of many terms, propaganda words. The melody of "Shankotnama" is especially well-known in many of his poems. This work of Zhyrau immortalizes his name.

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