

AHAL IS MASTER OF THE BAGSHY TRADITION

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Abstract: The article examines the role of the Ahal bagshy tradition in the development of Turkmen musical art through the creative legacy of People's Artist of Turkmenistan Sahy Jepbarov. Special attention is given to his work as a performer, teacher and composer who expanded the repertoire of the Ahal school and transmitted its performance principles to several generations of students. Based on the song "Bellidir," the study analyzes the relationship between poetic text and musical rhythm, the heptasyllabic structure of the verse, wave-like melodic motion, phrase variation and improvisational performance. The results show that Jepbarov's creative practice became an important factor in preserving national repertoire, strengthening the professional continuity of the bagshy tradition and developing the expressive potential of traditional Turkmen music.

Keywords: Ahal tradition; bagshy; Sahy Jepbarov; Turkmen music; folk song; improvisation; melodic analysis; rhythm

Introduction

The rich musical heritage of the Turkmen people has long been preserved and passed down by generations of master bagshys (Turkmen traditional singers) and musicians. Within the bagshy tradition, which consists of several performance schools, many outstanding masters have risen to prominence. One of the most distinctive schools of Turkmen bagshy art is the Ahal bagshy tradition. One of its most renowned representatives was the famous bagshy Sahy Jepbarov, who mentored numerous disciples. People's Artist of Turkmenistan Sahy Jepbarov (1905-1977) achieved a special place in Turkmen bagshy art. Tirelessly devoted to his craft, he dedicated his talent to nurturing young people who aspired to master the bagshy profession. By diligently studying various performance styles and integrating them into his own art, he significantly expanded the repertoire of the Ahal bagshy tradition.

The purpose of this article is to determine the artistic and historical significance of Sahy Jepbarov's contribution to the Ahal bagshy tradition. The main tasks are to characterize his role as a performer, mentor and composer, to identify the features of the repertoire he developed, and to analyze the musical structure and improvisational nature of the song "Bellidir."

Theoretical analysis

Doctor of Art Studies Ch. Jumayev confirms the above with the following words: "The legacy left by Sahy Jepbarov to the Turkmen people is immeasurable. He traveled to various regions of Turkmenistan to meet different bagshys, learning the most popular songs of each area as well as rare melodies not encountered elsewhere, and incorporated them into his own creative work" [2, 268-272]. Among his well-known students were Nabat Nurmammedova, Nurjemal Adyyeva, Nurmyrat Annayev, Gurbandurdy Jengov, Hangeldi Annamyradov, Orazgeldi Ylyasov, Hojaguly Diwanayev, Dortguly Durdyev [10, 11], Nuryagdy Bayramov, Manegarayev, and Oraznepes Dowletnazarov [4, 37]. They made a tremendous contribution to the future development of Turkmen bagshy art. The recording of songs such as "Baga seýle," "Nowgi," "Ýar gara gözi," and "Oýanmaz" on gramophone records in Moscow helped Sahy Jepbarov gain international recognition as early as 1936. Sahy Jepbarov was not only a master performer of folk songs but also a composer who created numerous original works, including "Altyň biri," "Görşeli," "Şahyrym," "Gök çay," "Ýaýlaklary bar," "Ýarap borka," and "Mekany daglar," which today remain highly popular among listeners and performers.

The total number of songs created and reworked by the master bagshy exceeds one hundred. His creative work reflects themes of patriotism, lyrical love, the beauty of nature, labor education, and moral values. He also composed songs dedicated to the classical poets Magtymguly Pyragy and Mollanepes, including "Şahyrym" and "Nepes sen" [1, 22-23]. Having fully mastered the traditions of various schools of Turkmen bagshy art and applied advanced performance techniques, Sahy Jepbarov created musical works based on folk melodies such as "Pelek ömrüm," "Ýarahum," "Saparmämmed," "Nowaýy," and "Ýusup owgan." Based on the poetic works of Magtymguly such as "Ykbal bolmady," "Gözel sen," "Gitmezmiş," "Näler boldy," and "Bu gün," he created song interpretations and left them as a recorded legacy [5, 41]. He also taught many talented students the secrets of this art. Thus, the legacy left by Sahy Jepbarov for our people is truly immeasurable. As a performer, mentor, creator, and public figure, he made a significant contribution to the flourishing and development of Turkmen culture and art. The Ahal bagshy tradition is particularly rich in terms of repertoire and artistic quality. Sahy Jepbarov played a major role in expanding the number of songs performed within this tradition. His efforts greatly enriched the national musical treasury of Turkmenistan.

The musical structure of the song "Bellidir," performed by Sahy Jepbarov, includes heptasyllabic poetic lines. The 3/4 time signature of the song allows for flexible melodic movement within each verse. Stable rhythmic structures play an important role in expressing the national musical style and serve as a core feature of each composition. The melodic line gradually develops in wave-like motion, rising

and resolving in a natural flow. Improvisation plays an essential role in the performance, allowing variations in melody, rhythm, and phrasing across different verses. This improvisational freedom reflects the distinctive character of traditional bagshy performance.

Research methods

The research is based on historical-cultural, comparative and musicological methods. The study combines analysis of written sources with structural examination of rhythm, melodic movement, phrase construction and improvisational variation in the selected song material. This approach makes it possible to reveal both the historical role of the performer and the inner musical logic of the composition.

Experimental part

The regular structure is maintained by dividing each line of the first stanza equally into two measures: a-2 t., b-2 t., a-2 t., b1-2 t.

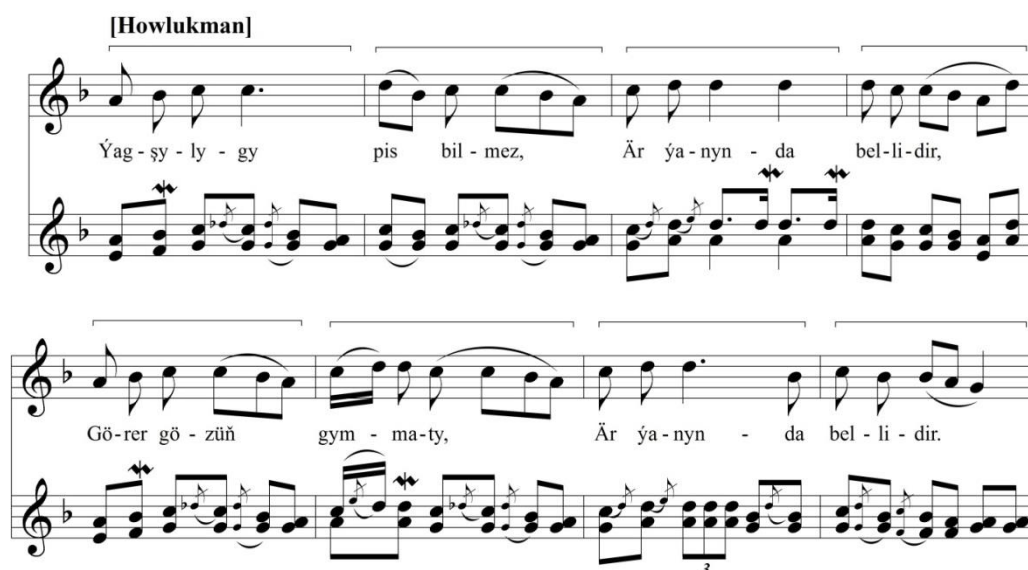


Fig. 1. First note example: “Do not hurry”.

The connection between the poem and the musical rhythm is established by maintained a stable structure in each phrase of the stanza. However, the concepts of phrases in the analysis of poetry and phrases in music are slightly different. “The smallest structure expressing a complete idea in music is called a phrase” (a phrase, in turn, is divided into a sentence, and a sentence into a motif) [7,288-293]. Therefore, two phrases of music correspond to 4 lines of the poem. Thus, two equal phrases are formed in the musical sound of each stanza.

One of the moments to be noted in the presentation of the theme are the same-direction (gradually rising) musical phrases that begin to move along different intervals: 1st phrase-a1-b1-c2; 2nd phrase-c2-d2; 3rd phrase-a1-b1-c2; 4th phrase-c2-d2.

In the movements at the final moments of the musical parts (phrases) of the stanza, the retention of the final syllable on the intervals of thirds, quarters and

seconds seems to be a more sonorous form in that phrase. The melody which gradually enters into action, tends to rise in each phrase and returns to the end of the phrase, as if explaining its resolution. Thus, a wave-like movement is achieved. That is, according to the first stanza, the musical phrase corresponding to each poetic phrase is concentrated in the following motifs:

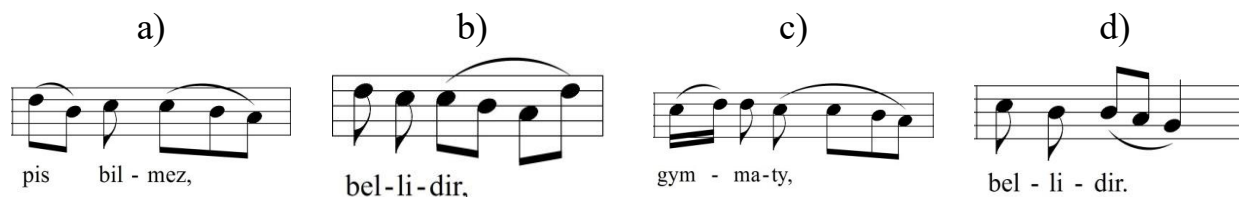


Fig. 2. Motif variants in the first stanza: a, b, c, d.

5. Results and discussion

These different melodic turns mean that the same parts are expressed by the composer on the basis of improvisation. "Improvisation in performance is mainly explained by freedom and spontaneity within the limits of the established form. In the development of the melody this is associated with the transformation of the melody in each bar in a variational or variant manner, melodic turns, often occurring in pairs, and the melody being changed in the second time; one of the elements of a two-element melody remains unchanged, while the other changes in each bar; the addition of additional melodic turns, phrases to the melody or the fact that some parts of the melody remain unplayed in the music; the use of a wide range of sequence types" [6,106].

As can be seen from the examples of the notes, the others from the second phrase reach a steady state at the pitch a. But here the e2-b-a-d sequence is only in its own independent wave motion, and the others are in a state of rest.

It is not distinguished from the final motifs, but is characterized by the extension of the intonation to a quarter. The very occurrence of these two conditions leads to an increase in the expressiveness of the phrase. The sound f that completes the phrase is characterized by the fact that it jumps from the a1 in front of the pitch to the IV level, demanding its further development within a stable quarter. Therefore, it is located in the center of the stanza, a quarter below the level it reached, creating a transition moment to the beginning of a new form of the first phrase, which begins with a stable a sound.

The next stanza expands in volume and at the same time gives rise not to a new melodic turn but to a slightly developed form of the stated theme. This is especially clearly seen in the melodic movement in the first half of the stanza. "Melodic is a monophonic sequence of sounds of a musical work, which contains the variability of the heights of these sounds and is endowed with an independent figurative-musical thought, character and originality"[9, 66]:

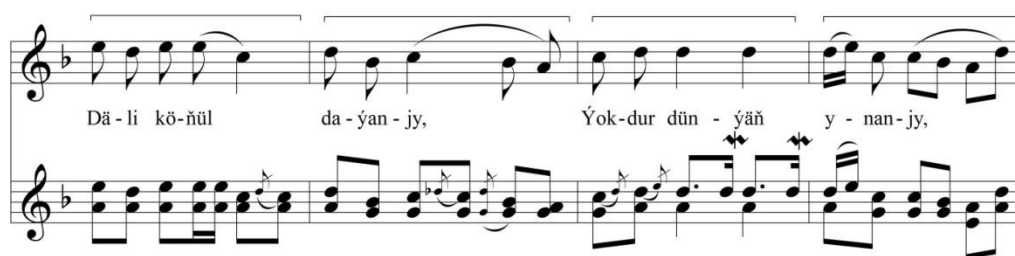


Fig. 3. Development of the melodic movement in the following stanza.

The opening phrase of the verse now develops both rhythmically and melodically. As the singer gradually moves into higher tones, a sense of excitement is easily created in the song. The e2-pitched note encountered here is the beginning of a familiar transition to the f-pitched note encountered in the third verse. The rise of the notes, the slight activation of the rhythm in the minor duration, indicate that the song is gradually developing.

In all the following stanzas, the division into $4+3=7$ syllables, as mentioned above, is maintained in a regular manner. The musical phrase at the beginning of the third stanza keeps the line of poetry within the limits of only two sounds: e-d. At the end of the stanza the musical content of this part of the analyzed stanzas are repeated.

The 4th and 5th bars, which reach their highest point, serve as the climax and the continuous ending of the song. Here in the high register the use of a and b musical phrases in new forms is encountered: a commonality of melodic movements and rhythmic similarities:



Fig. 4. Musical phrases in the high register and the climax section.

The lack of use of different pitch-range intonations in the final syllables of sentences in the performance of the bahshy, as in the first paragraph discussed above, can be explained by the limitation of this high register. Because in the songs sung by bahshy, the syllable is often drawn out and voiced in different movements in the

introduction and development sections. Prolonging the melody in the highest voices creates technical difficulties for the performer. Therefore, effective intonations are often used, mainly in situations that are convenient for performance.

Conclusions

The performance of the famous Sahy Jepbarov is important for future bahshys to improve in this profession. The influence of the folk songs he learned from his teachers and the songs he created independently and firmly established in the repertoire of the bahshys has been enormous on the art of Turkmen bahshys in general. In higher registers, prolonged melodic ornamentation becomes technically challenging, which explains why expressive embellishments are mostly used in musically comfortable sections of the song. The climax of the composition is achieved in the fourth and fifth verses, where the melodic intensity reaches its peak. The performance style of Sahy Jepbarov remains an important foundation for future generations of bagshys. Both the folk songs he learned from earlier masters and the original compositions he created became an integral part of the general Turkmen bagshy repertoire. His influence on the development of Turkmen musical culture is immense and lasting.

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